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ELAM
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(Shinar)
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PERSIAN GULF
Shechem
Moriah
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THE

# BIBLE-WORK.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT.

VOL. I.

## Genesis Chap. I. to Exodus Chap. XII.

FROM THE CREATION TO THE EXODUS.

THE REVISED TEXT, ARRANGED IN SECTIONS; WITH COMMENTS SELECTED FROM THE CHOICEST MOST ILLUMINATING AND HELPFUL THOUGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN CENTURIES, TAKEN FROM FOUR HUNDRED SCHOLARLY WRITERS.

PREPARED BY

J. GLENTWORTH BUTLER, D.D.

"So they read in the book in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—NEHEMIAH, viii. 8.

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General Map for this Volume, . . . . . faces title-page.
Sojourning Places of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, . . faces page 298.
Authors Cited and Key to Abbreviations, . . . . . pages 643–647.

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## A PERSONAL WORD TO THE READER.

For a right apprehension and an adequate comprehension the Scriptures of both Testaments should be read, not in detached passages or chapters, but continuously and with close heed to their manifold links of connection For such continuous heedful reading, in order to the clearest apprehension of these wonderful disclosures and the fullest appreciation of their priceless truths, every line in these volumes has been carefully prepared ; not for the trained scholar only, but equally for all readers of average intelligence and education.

The *aim* has been to furnish in a single compendium an orderly, coherent, proportionate, and measurably complete exposition of the Sacred Text, so that the meaning of the Divine utterances, as discerned by studious, devout interpreters, qualified by special gifts or attainments, may be disclosed to all who will devoutly read. A broader statement of this *aim* is outlined by Dr. Hales, the learned author of the "Analysis of Sacred Chronology," in a paragraph which occurs in the Introduction to that work :

"We have still to search in vain for a history of the Bible which shall be plain and clear, even to the unlearned, and yet concise, correct, and critical ; a history which shall : (1) arrange all the scattered events of Scripture in a regular and lucid chronological and geographical order ; (2) trace the connection between the Old and New Testaments thoughout, so as to render the whole one uniform and consistent narrative ; (3) expound the mysteries, doctrines, and precepts of both, intelligibly, rationally, and faithfully ; without adding to or diminishing from the word of God ; and without undue respect to persons, parties, or sects ; (4) unfold and interpret the whole grand and comprehensive scheme of '*the prophetic argument*' from Genesis to Revelation, all admirably linked and closely connected together, subsisting in the divine mind before the foundation of the world ; and gradually revealed to mankind at sundry times and divers modes and degrees, during the Patriarchal, Mosaical, and Christian dispensations, as they were able to bear it ; (5) solve real difficulties, and reconcile apparent dissonances, resulting from the obscurity of the original text, or from inaccurate translations ; (6) expose the weakness and inconclusiveness of sceptical objections and cavils ; and, in fine, copy as closely as possible the brevity and conciseness, yet simplicity and plainness, of the Gospel style."

The *motive* for the toil devoted to these volumes has been an intense yearning for a form and substance of Scriptural exposition that, being complete and attractive, may be continuously read, and may prove itself so sufficient and satisfactory that it will be studied again and again, until God's truth shall achieve its purposed mastery over mind and heart and life. The demand for such a sufficient and satisfactory exposition is strongly emphasized by the unquestioned fact that *a devout study of the Scriptures by every confessing disciple of Christ is the one supreme vital need of the Church of God ;* a fact that has long been believed and repeatedly affirmed by her entire living, godly ministry and membership. Well was this voiced by two who were among the most eminent and saintly of American scholars. Said Professor Tayler Lewis :

"The age, and all serious minds of the age, are called to the inward study of the *Word* itself. In the signs of the times we seem to hear the voice that came to Augustine in his memorable conversion-struggle in the garden, 'Take up the book and read—take up the book and read.' It seems to say to us with a new emphasis, 'Search the Scriptures,' explore the Scriptures, there are hidden treasures there, there are living waters there ; study the Scriptures, they contain more than *knowledge*, the words they speak unto you, 'they are *spirit* and they are *life*.'"

And, writing of "a desire for a more perfect realization of Christianity," as "manifestly a powerful element now working deep in the Christian mind," Professor Henry B. Smith used these terse golden words :

"Piety is nourished by scriptural truth. Feeling not based on truth is irrational. Strong religious feeling not based on scriptural truth is enthusiasm or fanaticism, and is equally removed from true godliness as supineness or indifference. The highest type of religion—religion which fills the soul, and stirs every muscle of holy enterprise ; which absorbs us in rapturous contemplation of the divine glory, and embraces the world in its benevolent zeal ; which renders one's own heart an altar on which daily incense rises to God, and pants to hear the voice of praise ascending from all mankind – is inspired by the Divine Spirit in connection with the highest forms of truth. God's perfections and character, in all their infinitude, majesty, and glory ;—the duty of entire consecration to him ; of the whole heart's love ; of unconditional submission ; of disinterested affection ; a willingness that God should do all things for his own glory ; –the doctrines of his absolute sovereignty, both as the dispenser of providential events and the enacter of laws ; of man's utter ruin by nature ; of his accountable ability and moral impotence ; of Christ's all-sufficient atonement ; of electing grace ; of justification by faith ; of instantaneous regeneration, wrought alone by the Holy Spirit ; of spontaneous obedience, arising from controlling desires to vindicate Christ's character, and to promote the interests of his kingdom,—all must be vividly brought before the mind. Feeble views of truth may nurture a sickly growth of piety ; but for the production of that humble, yet bold, masculine, aggressive piety, which will electrify the world, and gather the nations around the cross, these higher forms of divine truth are essential."

[The reader is desired to note that the text used in these Old Testament volumes is that of the recent Revision ; and is taken from the careful reprint of the Messrs. Harper Brothers.]

# THE BIBLE.

## Section 1.

### THE BIBLE:

ITS STRUCTURE AND ELEMENTS. WRITERS AND CONTENTS.

THE Bible, or the Book of God, is a collection of writings commenced not later than 1500 B.C., and completed about 100 A.C. It is called by Irenæus (b. 120 A.C.) *Divine Writings*, and by Clemens Alexandrinus (d. 220 A.C.) *Scriptures, the God-inspired Scriptures*. Hence it has been designated the Canon, or the Canonical Scriptures, because, including all and only the writings given by inspiration of God, it is the canon or rule of faith and practice for man. M.——The Canon, as we have received it, shows a most varied collection of Hebrew and Greek works—histories, poems, tracts, prophecies, and letters, written at intervals during sixteen centuries, by many writers known and unknown; and among those who are known, men of every rank and condition—prophets, kings, priests, a scribe, a sheep-master, a tax-gatherer, a physician, a tent-maker, and two or three fishermen. The volume which we call the Bible grew slowly under their hands, and was separated from other religious writings by degrees. So God ordered it; so it seemed good in his sight. D. F.——The Bible, which we are accustomed to see as one book, consists of sixty-six distinct productions, the works of about forty different authors. The composition of these many books extended through a period of 1600 years, from the time of Moses, more than 1500 years before Christ, to the death of the apostle John, near the close of the first century of our era. The composition of the 39 books of the Old Testament stretches over a period of 1100 years from Moses to Malachi. J. P. T.——God created each writer for his place. Each builds on what is before. Each writer is in his precise historic place, and the result of the completed work is a wonderful organism. A. A. H.

The collection of Books, which we bind up together, constitutes the authentic and complete Bible, the authoritative fountain of our religious knowledge. But this does not involve and should not be allowed to imply, or understood to cover, the opinion that all the Books in the collection are of equal value, or equally full of the mind of God, or equally applicable in their teachings to the time in which we live. They are all sacred, as separated to holy use from the mass of even religious literature; all profitable, but not all equally profitable; and all to be read with reverence, but at the same time with intelligent recognition of the progress which is in the Bible itself, and in the order and brightness of Divine dispensations of truth. D. F.——The revelation of God was written by so many different persons, at different times, and with such different habits of thought and of feeling, because it was intended to be a book for the instruction of the race; and this it could not be if it were written in any one style, or were stamped with the peculiarities of any one human mind. In order to this, it must embrace narratives, poetry, proverbs, parables, letters, profound reasoning,—which, while they all harmonized in doctrine and in spirit, should yet be as diversified as the hills and valleys of the green earth; should yet refract the pure light of inspiration in colors to catch and fix every eye. Wonderful book! If some of its parts seem to *us* less interesting, let us remember that nature too has many departments, and that it was made for all; and the more we study it in this point of view, the more ready shall we be to join with the apostle in saying, that "*all* scripture is given by inspiration of God." M. H.

Domestic scenes, confessions of conscience, pourings forth of prayer in secret, travels, proverbs, revelations of the depths of the heart, the holy courses pursued by a child of God, weaknesses unveiled, falls, recoveries, inward experiences, parables, familiar letters, theological

treatises, sacred commentaries on some ancient Scripture, national chronicles, military annals, political statistics, descriptions of God, portraits of angels, celestial visions, practical counsels, rules of life, solutions of cases, judgments of the Lord, sacred hymns, predictions of future events, narratives of what passed during the days preceding our creation, sublime odes, inimitable pieces of poetry ;—all this is found in the Bible by turns, and all this meets our view in most delightful variety, and presenting a whole whose majesty, like that of a temple, is overpowering. *Gaussen.*

God's message came sometimes in the facts of history, sometimes in isolated promises, sometimes by Urim, sometimes by dreams and voices and similitudes, sometimes by types and sacrifices, sometimes by prophets specially commissioned. It takes the form now of annals, now of philosophic meditation, now of a sermon, now of an idyl, now of a lyric song. Sometimes it expands, through chapter after chapter, the details of a single day in an individual life ; sometimes it crushes into one single clause the sweeping summary of the records of twenty generations. At one time it will give the minutest incidents of one event in a single reign ; at another it will heap the dust of oblivion over dynasties of a hundred kings. We may compare its course to that of a stream which sometimes dwindles into a tiny rivulet, and sometimes broadens into an almost shoreless sea. But it is a stream whose fountains lie deep in the everlasting hills. Its sources are hidden in the depths of a past Eternity, and its issues in the depths of a future Eternity. It begins with the chaos of Genesis, " vast and void ;" it ends with a book which Milton has called " the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." *Farrar.*

Open the Bible, examine the fifty sacred authors therein, from Moses, who wrote in the wilderness four hundred years before the siege of Troy, to the fisherman son of Zebedee, who wrote fifteen hundred years later in Ephesus and Patmos, under the reign of Domitian, and you will find none of those mistakes which the science of every country detects in the works of preceding generations. Carefully go through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, in search of such faults, and as you carry on the investigation remember that it is a book which treats of everything, which describes nature, which recounts its wonders, which records its creation, which tells us of the formation of the heavens, of the light, of the waters, of the air, of the mountains, of animals, and of plants ; that it is a book which acquaints us with the first revolutions of the world, and which foretells also its last ; that it is a book which describes them with circumstantial details, invests them with sublime poetry, and chants them in fervent melodies ; that it is a book replete with Eastern imagery, full of majesty, variety, and boldness ; that it is a book which treats of the earth and things visible, and at the same time of the celestial world and things invisible ; that it is a book in which nearly fifty writers, of every degree of cultivation, of every order, of every condition, and separated from one another by more than fifteen hundred years, have been engaged ; that it is a book written variously in the centre of Asia, in the sands of Arabia, in the deserts of Judæa, in the porches of the Jewish temple, and in the rustic schools of the prophets of Bethel and Jericho, in the magnificent palaces of Babylon, and on the idolatrous banks of the Chebar, and afterward in the Western centre of civilization, in the midst of the Jews and their ignorant councils, among Polytheism and its idols, and, as it were, in the bosom of Pantheism and its foolish philosophy ; that it is a book whose first writer was, during forty years, brought up among the magicians of Egypt, who regarded the sun, planets, and elements as endowed with intelligence, reacting upon and governing our world by their continual evaporation ; and that it is a book whose first pages preceded by more than nine hundred years the most ancient philosophers of Greece and Asia —Thales, Pythagorus, Zaleucus, Xenophon, and Confucius ; that it is a book which carries its records into the scenes of the invisible world, the hierarchy of angels, the latest periods of futurity, and the glorious consummation of all things. Well, search in its 50 authors, its 66 books, its 1189 chapters, and its 31,173 verses ; search for a single one of the thousand errors with which every ancient and modern author abounds when they speak of the heavens or of the earth, of their revolutions or of their elements, and you will fail to find it. *Gaussen.*

Carefully observe the constitution of the Bible ! At least three fourths of it are narrative ; narrative in the form of a general historical story, which tells of the public transactions of nations, of the intrigues, councils, and wars of princes, the devastation of countries, the establishment, the enlargement, or the overthrow of empires, the rising of powers against each other, their alliances, their conflicts, their commercial interactions, with the results which

followed from all to the kingdom of God ; or narrative in the form of personal portraiture, recording events, depicting characters, of which and of whom we should know nothing except from it. In this regard, this Bible of ours becomes a mirror of human life, the value of which we cannot overstate, the perfection of which is utterly unique. What scores and hundreds of persons there are, brought to light by it, in the most various circumstances possible, in the most various exhibitions of character, who become in their names, persons, figures, as familiar to us as if we had walked and talked with them freely in our most impressible years ! Abraham, Jacob, Esau, Joseph, Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Samuel, Deborah and Ruth, David and Solomon, Elijah and his more gentle successor, Ahab and his superb and fierce Phœnician queen : what multitudes there are ! We cannot count them. A figure stands out from the dimness of the past, only for an instant ; but there it stands before us forever ! R. S. S.

The Bible constitutes a perpetual commentary on God's providential government, and shows us, by innumerable examples, how to interpret those lessons which the varying events of life, its joys and sorrows, its temptations and trials, are calculated to teach us. There is hardly an event, hardly a character that has not its parallel in that immense picture gallery of historic and biographic sketches which the Scripture opens to us. The whole of life seems mirrored there ; the examples range through all the ranks of social life, embrace all varieties of character, and illustrate by analogous cases almost every conceivable combination of circumstances in which man can be placed. It is hardly possible to imagine ourselves in any situation in which that immense repertory and storehouse of monitory or touching examples will not furnish a precedent either for our warning, consolation, or guidance. . . . So may it be truly said that all the phenomena of religious experience are there described with incomparable force. The devout mind finds every shade of emotion,—of penitence, faith, hope, devout aspiration,—and every variation of spiritual consciousness, in words better than his own, and as if by one who knew man better than man knows himself. His whole nature is reflected in that faithful mirror. *Rogers.*

Remember, too, *the marvellous poetry* of the Bible, at which all the world wonders : so majestic, so pathetic, in contents so various, in its mass so vast, in its spiritual beauty so unequalled ! It is poetry unshackled by the fetters of rhyme, where the image becomes instinct with the spirit of song, where the thoughts chime as words cannot. It sings itself, therefore, through the mind alike of child and man. It utters itself in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs, to which it has given its impulse and meaning, in all languages of the world. It becomes the source, and constant inspiration, of the great historical liturgies of the church, of which it has been computed that two thirds are drawn directly from the sacred volume ! It quickens the fancy, stirs the imagination, soothes, solaces, or animates the heart ; and though not forming so large a part, it forms as important and as memorable a part, in the structure of the Bible ; it contributes as much to its power and spiritual impression, as do narratives and history. R. S. S.——The Bible contains poems of nearly all kinds. In the Book of Job we have its single drama of unequalled sublimity ; in the songs of Moses and of Deborah the grandest pæans to liberty which were ever sung ; in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes didactic and philosophic poems of great beauty and wisdom ; in the Song of Solomon an exquisite pastoral ; in the Lamentation a most pathetic elegy. Epic indeed there is none ; but Hebrew history is itself a Divine epic, and in the intense utterances of the prophets and the sweet songs of the psalmists we have as it were the ivy and the passion-flowers which twine around its bole. But it is in lyric poetry that the Hebrew genius most characteristically displayed itself, and in its songs we have, as Luther said, " a garden in which the fairest flowers bloom, but over which there blow tempestuous winds." And of all the characteristics of Hebrew poetry, its fresh simplicity, its stainless purity, its lofty purpose, its genial cheerfulness, its free universality of tone, none is more remarkable than the fact that it is intensely religious, that it is full of God. What the son of Sirac says of David is true of all the Hebrew poets : " In all his works he praised the Holy One most high with words of glory ; with his whole heart he sung songs, and loved him that made him." *Farrar.*

*Its Silences.* Its supernatural origin is as clearly indicated in what it does not say as in what it says. With its many writers, and its scope of many centuries, one would imagine a change of trend here and there, a sudden, sharp angle. But, instead, we have a beautiful and wonderful growth,—the blade, the ear, the full corn in the ear. There is no violence, no accident, no chasm, but everywhere an orderly and logical evolving of the greater from the less. In order that this result be brought about, it was

needful that great omissions take place. It is the growth of the truth, and the people who represented the truth, that was constantly in mind. Hence, everything that did not bear on this one thing was regarded as of minor importance. In the world s mind there are characters and events which filled the entire horizon of the age, and are still the wonder of the student ; but because they had no relation to the one great development and distribution of the truth of God, they were not the subjects of inspiration. Hence, we regard the selection of material by the sacred writers as one of the strongest proofs of their calling and endowment for their great work. The scriptural method is singularly independent. What does not belong to the motive is never once employed. A picture is in process ; hence, the color that is not needed is never brought out upon the palette and applied to the canvas. This has been the wonder of all the sceptical ages,—how only fragments of lives could be used, and the rest left in total obscurity : as if it were the object of inspiration to give biographies of men ! Its object is the truth, God's whole, one, growing truth ; and where an ant can help toward its maturity and significance his writers are as ready to introduce it as an empire. *Hurst.*

Holy Scripture is essentially an *unsystematic* Book ; nothing like order or arrangement is attempted in it. The classification, adjustment, accommodation, systematization of its doctrines and precepts, the methodizing of them into creeds or codes of duty, is not even aimed at. The precept and the doctrine are thrown out just as the occasion for them offers. E. M. G. ——There is between the construction of the Bible and that of nature a singular analogy. There is the same apparent want of order and adjustment, and the same deep harmony, running through the whole. The Bible contains a system of theology ; but it contains it as the heavens contain the system of astronomy. Its truths lie there in no logical order. They appear at first like a map of the apparent motions of the planets, whose paths seem to cross each other in all directions ; but you have only to find the true centre, and the orbs of truth take their places, and circle around it like the stars of heaven. And the efforts of thought, the struggles of intellect, that have been called forth for the adjustment of this system, have done more for the human mind than its efforts in any other science Its questions have stirred, not the minds of philosophers alone, but every meditative human soul. So the Bible contains a system of ethics ; but it is as the earth contains a system of geology ; and long might the eye of the listless or unscientific reader rest upon its pages without discovering that the system was there,—just as men trod the earth for near six thousand years without discovering that its surface was a regular structure, with its strata arranged in an assignable order. M. H.

This complaint of the want of method in Scripture, what is it in fact but this—that it is not dead, but living? that it is no *herbarium*, no *hortus siccus*, but a garden?—a wilderness, if men choose to call it so ; but a wilderness of sweets, with its flowers upon their stalks—its plants freshly growing, the dew upon their leaves, the mould about their roots—with its lowly hyssops and its cedars of God. And when men say that there is want of *method* in it, they would speak more accurately if they said that there was want of *system ;* for the highest method, even the method of the Spirit, may reign where system there is none. Method is divine, is inseparable from the ideas of God and of order ; but system is of man, is a help to the weakness of his faculties, is the artificial arrangement by which he brings within his limited ken that which in no other way he would be able to grasp as a whole. That there should be books of systematic theology—books with their plan and scheme thus lying on their very surface and meeting us at once—this is most needful ; but most needful, also, that Scripture should not be such a book. The dearest interests of all, of wise men equally as of women and children, demand this. *Trench.*

The Bible account has no philosophy, and no appearance of any philosophy, either in the abstract form, or in that earlier poetical form which the first philosophy assumed. Its statements of grand facts have no appearance of bias in favor of any class of ideas. Its great antiquity is beyond dispute ; it is older, certainly, than history or philosophy. It was before the dawning of anything called science, as is shown by the fact that everything is denoted by its simplest phenomenal or optical name. There is no assigning of non-apparent causations, except the continual going forth of the mighty Word. It is impossible to discover any connection between it and any mythical poetry. The holy sublimity that pervades it is at war with the idea of direct and conscious forgery, designed to impose on others, and the thought of it as a mere work of genius having its interest in a display of inventive and descriptive talent, is inconsistent with every notion we can form of the thinking and aims of that early youth of the human race. It was not the age then, nor

till long after, of literary forgeries or fancy tales. We are shut up to the conclusion of its subjective truthfulness, and its subjective authenticity. This stands alone in the world, like the primeval granite of the Himalaya among the later geological formations. *T. Lewis.*

*Its leading Facts and Truths.* The Bible purports to contain a record of the word of God as made known unto man in three successive and distinct revelations. The earliest of these is the patriarchal or primitive revelation, the record of which is wholly contained in the Book of Genesis. It was the faith of Abraham and the other patriarchs, men who walked with God, to whom he made known his will, and with whom he entered into a covenant, in which his favor was conditioned upon their obedience to his law. This primeval revelation was not abrogated, but confirmed and enlarged, and made the foundation of the special polity of the Jews, in the second grand announcement of the Law, which was made by Moses in the wilderness. Under this Mosaic dispensation the believing Jews continue to this day. In the New Testament, we find a record of the third and far the most complete and adequate revelation of God to man, based as before on what had preceded it, which it does not supersede, but sanctions and reaffirms in all its essential features, while supplementing them with new and higher truth. Christianity is related to Judaism as the splendor of the noonday sun is to the early twilight. "Think not," its author exclaims, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets : I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." *F. Bowen.*

Of the historic revelations of God, the Bible is at once the record and the inspired comment. He revealed himself to the fathers of the human race. And when the nations were sunk in idolatry, he chose one man whose posterity, divinely taught, were to be the almoners of light to the world. Them, kept together as one nation, in due time, he delivered from a long bondage. To shut out the pollutions of idolatry, he hedged them in, and cut them off, to a large extent, from intercourse with the rest of mankind. In spite of their natural tendencies which were toward the corruptions of idolatry. through a long course of providential discipline, attended by a succession of supernatural interpositions, they were inspired with an unconquerable abhorrence of idolatry. Alone upon the earth, they were the worshippers of the only living and true God. They alone had a true conception of his holiness. They alone, when polytheism, with all its degrading rites, prevailed elsewhere, —prevailed all about them, among Syrians, Phœnicians, Babylonians, Egyptians, — adored the Creator and Universal Ruler. To them were given prophecies of a more glorious and satisfying manifestation of God, which should put an end to their pre-eminence, which should even result in their destruction for the unbelief with which they regard it. At length, in the fulness of time, or at the proper juncture, two thousand years after the call of Abraham, when this divine movement and supernatural history began, came the crowning act of revelation to which everything before looked forward and for which all things were made ready, —the advent of the Divine Redeemer in the form of a servant, through whom the Kingdom of God, casting aside the national limits that had protected its infancy, dropping its fundamental form, was made universal, and the privilege of communing with God was offered to every human being. As we trace the stream of divine revelation from its remote fountains as it widens along its course, and finally expands into the broad ocean, we see that its waters have been waters of cleansing ; that whatever blessings have been derived elsewhere, the holiness that is in the world has come from that. Where, save in the Bible, is a knowledge of God, that has the attributes of certainty and sufficiency--of certainty, being free from error and bearing on it the Divine seal, and of sufficiency, being adequate to our necessities as sinful and dying creatures, in need of forgiveness and of aid in the conflict with evil, in need, too, of an assured hope of everlasting life? There is presented to us a manifestation of God in the Son of man, which enables us to enter into living communion with him and to perform our work in life in the spirit of filial obedience. *G. P. Fisher.*

*Its Disclosures concerning God.* God, whose being, perfections and government are partially made known to us through the testimony of his works and of conscience, has made a further revelation of himself in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—a revelation attested at the first by supernatural signs, and confirmed through all the ages since by its moral effects upon the individual soul, and upon human society ; a revelation authoritative and final. In this revelation God has declared himself to be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; and he manifested his love for the world through the incarnation of the Eternal Word for man's redemption, in the sinless life, the expiatory sufferings and death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and the Saviour ; and also in the mission of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter,

for the regeneration and sanctification of the souls of men. J. P. T.——The truths comprehended under the terms, Creation, Providence, Original Sin, Incarnation, and Redemption, constitute the essence of the Christian Revelation. A grand and common characteristic of these doctrines is that they grapple with and plainly solve the problems of natural religion inherent in man. The doctrine of Creation attests the existence of God the creator and lawgiver, and of the bond which unites man to God. The doctrine of Providence explains and justifies prayer—the instinctive repairing of man to the living God, to the supreme Power which attends his life and presides over his lot. The doctrine of Original Sin accounts for the presence of evil and disorder in man and in the world. The doctrines of the Incarnation and Redemption deliver man from the consequences of evil, and open to him, in another life, the perspectives of the re-establishment of order. Unquestionably the system is grand, complete, coherent, mighty. It responds to the cries of the human soul for deliverance from the heavy burden which rests upon it, and imparts to it, along with the forces it needs, the satisfaction to which it aspires. *Guizot.*

Notice how, all through the Bible, the two great elements of practical goodness, duty to God and duty to man, go hand in hand ; how the service of God constantly includes all moral duty, all faithfulness in the social relations of man ; how uniform is the view of the awfulness of sin, of its awful doom when the day of retribution comes at last ; how constant the encouragement to man to seek communion with God ; what a lofty place prayer holds alike in the Old Testament and the New ; and how beautiful the Bible pictures are of the intercourse of redeemed man with God. W. G. B.

The ways of God with man take the *particular form of a covenant.* A covenant is an agreement between two parties, with conditions to be fulfilled and corresponding benefits to be realized on both sides. The very nature of a covenant implies that the parties to it are intelligent ; and the very existence of two rational beings in sensible relation with each other involves a covenant expressed or understood. Hence the Bible is fittingly termed the testament or covenant. M.——The entire revelation may be analyzed, as consisting of three classes of truths : —First, the record of historic events which prepared the way for certain *covenants :* next, the covenant and revelation connected with it ; and next the history and revelations connected with the development of that covenant. The story of creation and of Eden prepares the way for the covenant of grace with Adam ; the history developing this, prepares again the way for the covenant of protection to the race made with Noah. Then, under this covenant, begins the history preparatory to the Church covenant with Abraham, the history of whose development prepares the way for the Passover covenant to redeem the Church, and that again for the Sinai covenant ; then the history of the development of this Church, as Jehovah's spiritual commonwealth, prepares the way for the covenant with David, establishing the typical throne and kingdom of Messiah in the Church. From this time forward all the history and revelations through the prophets are to the end of preparing the way of the Lord's coming, as the King of a universal kingdom. S. R.

Well may the Scriptures be called "THE BOOK." It is the Book of the race. It is the *old* family Bible, long intrusted to the keeping of the *first-born*, but where all may come and find their natal record. Here is the historical genealogy of all nations. Compare, in this respect, the simple, truthful, modest ethnology of Genesis with other oriental writings, and with those monstrous legends of theirs that are so out of all proportion with themselves, and all other history. Here, too, is the spiritual genealogy of human souls,—the generation and the re generation, the man of the earth and the "man from heaven," the *humanity*, or the life in Adam, the *Christianity*, or the life in Christ. Here is "the image of the earthly," and here is "the image of the Heavenly." Here, moreover, is that which belongs to all men as men, the ideas that above all others are the property of the race. Here is the fall, the redemption, the brotherhood in ruin as the ground of all true human sympathy, the brotherhood in grace as the ground of all true human hope. T. L.

# Section 2.

## THE BIBLE:

### ITS UNITY OF TEACHING AND THEME. ITS METHOD, HISTORICAL AND PROGRESSIVE.

THE use of the term "Bible" to denote the whole collection of Sacred Writings, cannot, we believe, be traced to an earlier date than the fourth century. But, now that the collection is made, each generation sees for itself how thoroughly the Books form one Book, structurally and spiritually one, marvellously woven together —its most distant parts connected by quotations, allusions, and the correspondence of type and antitype—and the whole moulded together by a profound unity of thought and plan. It is not mechanically combined or sewed together. It is organically united as a living tree, or as a living body of which one part cannot be touched without affecting all. God has tempered all together, so that if one member of the Bible suffer, all its members suffer with it. It may be persecuted, neglected, maligned, or controverted, but the Scripture may not be broken.

Destructive criticism may go to work on it with its penknife, as did the infatuated king of Judah on the roll of Jeremiah's prophecy; but when penknife and fire have done their worst, the writing is calmly restored as it was before. Our Bible cannot be taken to pieces, or dissolved into its elements. D. F.

The Bible is one teaching, from first to last in perfect harmony with itself. From beginning to end, through all its many and various treatises, the one doctrine steadily grows and expands; unfolding itself into a grand and symmetrical system of truth, at last perfect and complete; indicating clearly and certainly one mind, one intelligence, one purpose, one supervising control. *E. L. Clark.*——Because it is formed as it is it is made impossible to destroy its integrity, or to make it teach another doctrine than that in which all its parts concur; impossible to paraphrase, yet easy to translate it into every tongue. Because it is framed as it is we get from it such an ultimate impression and conception of the truth, so complete and powerful, as could not otherwise have been conveyed. And all the time it is one in its substance, in its truth, in its law, in its clear revelation of God and his government, of man and his needs, of Christ the Lord, the King of the world, and of the Divine spiritual kingdom in which he is the head, and into which all who believe in him are thereby gathered. It has a vast, multiform oneness; a oneness compacted out of all the varieties of experience, power, spiritual culture, in many separate and widely scattered writers. It is a unity built of variety; and it makes the Bible the supreme phenomenon of the literary world. It is like the earth. It is a book for the earth, and it corresponds with it: one planet, but with rivers, meadows, and mountain ranges assembled in it; with seas and islands, the narrow isthmus, the outstretch of continents; with monitory fires underneath, and the great solemn stars above; with the moon walking the sky in placid brightness, and the sun shedding the splendor of day across the lands that are glad in his coming. So is the Bible. It has parable and psalm, brief story and vast legislation, mighty argument, charming incident, curt admonition. It too has its Sun of Righteousness; its Old Testament and its New, like answering hemispheres, what is latent in the one being patent in the other. R. S. S.

Historical records, ranging over many centuries, biographies, dialogues, catalogues of moral maxims and accounts of social experiences, poetry the most touchingly plaintive and the most buoyantly triumphant, predictions, exhortations, warnings, varying in style, in authorship, in date, in dialect, are thrown as it seems somewhat arbitrarily into a single volume. But beneath the differences of style, of language, and of method, a deeper insight will discover in Scripture such manifest unity of drift and purpose, both moral and intellectual, as to imply the continuous action of a single mind. To this unity Scripture itself bears witness, and nowhere more emphatically than in the words of Paul (Gal. 3:8), "The Scripture preached before the Gospel unto Abraham," etc. According to this assertion, the great doctrines and events of the Gospel dispensation were directly anticipated in the Old Testament. If the sense of the Old Testament became patent in the New, it was because the New Testament was already latent in the Old. Scripture is thus boldly identified with the Mind which inspires it; Scripture is a living Providence. The promise to Abraham anticipates the work of the Apostle; the earliest of the Books of Moses determines the argument of the Epistle to the

Galatians. Such a position is only intelligible when placed in the light of a belief in the fundamental *Unity* of all Revelation, underlying and strictly compatible with its superficial variety. And this true internal Unity of Scripture, even when the exact canonical limits of Scripture were still unfixed, was a common article of belief to all Christian antiquity. H. P. L.

The books of Holy Scripture commend themselves to our devout approval--they command our consciences, not merely nor chiefly on the ground of that superabundant literary and historic evidence which attests the genuineness and authenticity of each portion, and of the whole ; but *mainly* in virtue of the irresistible force of another kind of evidence which rises into view, as if of itself : this persuasion does not come to us as the fruit of critical acumen : it is no product of lexicons ; nor has it any necessary dependence upon the meaning of Hebrew words, or the significance of Hebrew idioms. We feel Holy Scripture to be—ONE BIBLE ; and it proves its *Oneness* by *three distinct modes of attestation ;* as thus—the Bible—or let us now speak of the Hebrew Scriptures, is *One Book*, from its first chapter to its last, because, although it is the work of many writers, it everywhere teaches ONE THEOLOGY ; and we utterly refuse to believe that many writers, in series, should have done this if each followed only his own inspiration. Again, the Bible is *One Book*, although it is the work of many writers, because, amid the diversities which this human instrumentality implies, there prevails throughout it what must be reverently spoken of as the indication of the *historic personality* of the SPEAKER ; everywhere this Speaker is the *same*, in mood, in purpose, *and in style*—it is the ETERNAL God that, in these books, speaks to man. But more than this, the Bible is *One Book* (and here we must speak of the New as well as of the Old Testament), inasmuch as it brings into view, in an occult manner, and yet undoubtedly, a One Divine Scheme, or system of justice and mercy. REVELATION, attested by supernatural events, is the opening out of an all-comprehensive course of procedure, as from God, toward the human family. Holy Scripture is *a structure*—integral and immovable as to its various constituents ; and if it be disintegrated, it is destroyed. Thoughtful men, even the best minds in every age, have thus believed, and have thus recorded their most mature convictions. I. T.

When we consider the sublimity of redemption as a scheme of thought, the mysterious pathos and power of the symbols by which it was shadowed forth, the vastness of the kingdom in which it was embodied as its consummation, we have in these ideas picked up along the track of ages in the line of this book—and found nowhere else—a unity of promise, of ritual, and of history, unfolding a unity of plan, that no growth of a national literature, no process of national development, no philosophy of history can account for. Such mighty conceptions could have originated only in the mind that encircles all worlds, foresees all ages, directs all events—and the progressive unity of redemption through all the lines of Prophecy, Ritual and History in the Bible, is the unveiling there of the mind of God. The phenomenon of this book has no parallel except in the book of creation written by the same hand : and how does the *moral* transcend the material ! J. P. T.

The whole Bible, both the Old Covenant with its histories, its hymns and its prophecies ; and the New with its narratives, its epistles of apostolic instruction and its single momentous book of prophecy--has as its common and pervading argument *one mighty subject* which, appearing under a thousand different forms, is substantially the same in every page of the sacred Volume. That subject is—the salvation appointed for the chosen of mankind, and the ruin decreed for those who reject the offer. But this great revelation of happiness and misery is differently made according to the difference of times and seasons. The *Personage who makes it*, who in each dispensation comes in contact with man—however he may subsequently commit the subordinate functions of teaching to his servants—is no other than *God himself*. In the earliest age of the world the Revelation was given *by God in person*, speaking to man without the intervention of any prophetical emissary, under some undescribed visible appearance. After the fall, it was probably left to the safe *keeping of tradition*, which, considering the longevity of mankind in those times, was a sufficiently secure depositary. When at and after the deluge, God was willing once more to save or to collect a people from the general mass of corruption, he again revealed his will, and the *Lord*, or the "*Angel of the Lord*,"—no other than God,—manifested himself to the patriarchs, and, though obscurely, promised a wondrous future :—and not only a temporal but an eternal and invisible future,—for "the fathers looked not for transitory promises." In due time the third series of revelation was delivered by one who declared of himself, "I am the Lord thy God," and who constantly uttered his

own high Will personally to the people of Israel under the title of *The Lord*. And when "the ends of the world"—the last section of the Divine dispensations—had arrived, the *fourth* series of revelation was opened, prosecuted, and concluded, by the same Divine Being in the person of Christ Jesus, in whom God (according to the analogy of his preceding manifestations, and in a way more perfect than any of them) once more exhibited himself to man—leaving his Apostles, as he had before left his prophets, to expand and enforce his personal teaching.

Thus was the Revealer of God's will ever the same—ever God himself. The substance of the Revelation was also (since the Fall) unchanged; but its form and character were perpetually varied. The former was stable as the purpose of God; the latter suited to and dependent on the circumstances of man. It is even as the sun himself (so often made the emblem of God) is ever one and the same; but the effects he produces vary with *our* varying position;—being at one time morning, at another noon, at another eve. The God of the patriarchs, of Moses, of the Gospel—is one immutable essence, his purpose unalterable; but he varies in the revealings of his light because we ourselves vary in our relative positions and capacities for receiving it. W. A. B.

It is all important that our faith be established and settled in the oneness of this immortal Book, which, with no flaw, no falsehood, no fable, no error, contains the only authentic revelation from God to man. The result of all investigation, all discoveries, all sciences, is to confirm the faith of men in the reality and accuracy of historic revelation; and the Book of God abides firmer in the convictions of the world to-day, than it did before it was assaulted by infidelity. Judaism blossoms into Christianity. Sinai points to Calvary. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. At his feet we sit as disciples reverently, gratefully and trustfully. Whatever theme we select, it leads us to that cross of the Son of God, which is the focus of all facts, the centre of all history, the substance of all truth, the light and life of every man that cometh into the world. *W. Adams.*——There is not a single portion from the first sentence, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," to the last "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all," which has not some radical connection with what anticipates or what follows. Christianity is essentially the religion of the Bible—its life inhering in all the parts. The Babylonian captivity has its connection with the subsequent missions of Christian apostles. Whoever arranged the Temple-worship finds an expositor in him who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. And the first lifeless chaos, out of which the world is said to have arisen, has constant relations to the final promise of the heavenly Jerusalem. It is the supreme encomium pronounced in the world on the human intelligence, that this religion, which purports to have come from God and to have within it the thoughts of his mind, yet asks men, impels them, to examine carefully many books in order completely to apprehend it. It challenges investigation, solicits study, that they may see how one part fits and finishes another, and how the whole converges on the Faith to be at last joyfully received. This seems an evident part of the pre-arranged plan of him who ushered Christianity into the world. Its whole scope may properly be said to be presented in sentences like this: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That "little Bible" may be said, with truth, to contain the spiritual substance of all. Yet while such sayings are microcosmic, embracing realms of truth in few words, the entire series of the writings is preserved, the most ancient among them are indorsed and commended by later teachers, and by him whom all revere as their Head, and all are presented in the unity and complexity of their manifold parts to the intellectual mastery of mankind. R. S. S.

The Scripture is all full of Christ, and all intended to point to Christ as our only Saviour. It is not only the law, which is a schoolmaster unto Christ, nor the types, which are shadows of Christ, nor yet the prophecies, which are predictions of Christ; but the whole Old Testament history is full of Christ. Even where *persons* are not, *events* may be types. And indeed every event points to Christ, even as he is alike the beginning, the centre, and the end of all history—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." One thing follows from this: only *that* reading or study of the Scriptures can be sufficient or profitable through which we learn to know Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life, to *us*." A. E.——The creation means Christ; the promise to shattered man in Eden means Christ; the sacrifices and all the ceremonies of Judaism mean Christ; the music of Israel's sweetest harp means Christ; the light that gleams and burns in prophecy means Christ; the Song of Songs rolls its tender strain

around Christ ; the burdens of the later seers were burdens of Christ. No page did Christ disclaim ; no prophet did Christ disown ; he appropriated all names and figures and symbols of beauty : he was the Root and the Offspring of David, he was the Bright and Morning Star, he was the Flower of Jesse and the Plant of Renown, he was the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, he was the Shepherd of the Flock, and the Redeemer of those who were in the hand of the enemy ; he had not where to lay his head, and was despised and rejected of men, yet he filled the firmament as One who was to be the Desire of all nations. What wonder, then, that when he met the distressed ones going to Emmaus, and when he heard the complaint of their ignorance and their sigh of suppressed dismay, he began at Moses and all the prophets and expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself? Without Christ the Bible is chaos ; with Christ it is order and music and light. J. P.

*Its Method, Historical and Progressive.*

Christianity is a *historic* religion. It claims to be a reasonable belief, but it does not base itself upon reason. Its foundation is laid on the rock of Fact. God's actual dealings with the world from its creation to the full establishment of the Christian Church constitute its subject matter, and form the ground out of which its doctrines spring. G. R.——This alone sharply discriminates the Bible from all other so-called sacred books, that it is professedly imbedded in human history, runs parallel with it and forms the most important part of it ; for all the principal dogmas themselves purport to be *facts*, and make the most significant part of the history it records. *Rogers.*——The Bible is the history of the work of the One Mediator as the "educator" of mankind, the record of the gradual progressive development of that work, from Paradise to Pentecost. Throughout that long and checkered history, the Christ, the Eternal Word, is at once the author and the subject of the Revelation. *Medd.*

Here is a great moral and religious system, revealed by degrees but completed in Christ ; a system the characteristic features of which are perfectly distinct, a system from beginning to end self-consistent. It is an historical religion, resting upon a series of facts, upon manifestations of God made from age to age in a connected series, and culminating in Christ. The authentic record of the facts and the authentic —because inspired—commentary upon them, or elucidation of them, are found in that collection of documents which compose the Old and New Testament. These are the original documentary sources to which we must resort in order to obtain a true understanding of this divinely given religion. G. P. F.—— The *historical* matters of Scripture, both narrative and prophecy, constitute, as it were, the bones of its system ; whereas the spiritual matters are as its muscle, blood, vessels, and nerves. As the bones are necessary to the human system, so Scripture must have its historical matters. The expositor who nullifies the historical groundwork of Scripture, for the sake of finding only spiritual truths everywhere, brings death on all correct interpretation. *Bengel.*

The Religion of the Bible has its roots in the region of Fact. Other religious systems are, in the main, ideal, being the speculations of individual minds, or the gradual growth of a nation's fanciful thought during years or centuries. The Religion of the Bible, though embracing much that is in the highest sense ideal, grounds itself upon accounts, which claim to be historical, of occurrences that are declared to have actually taken place upon the earth. That Jesus Christ was born under Herod the Great, at Bethlehem ; that he came forward as a Teacher of religion ; that he preached and taught, and performed many "mighty works" in Galilee, Samaria and Judæa during the space of some years ; that he was crucified by Pontius Pilate ; that he died and was buried ; that he rose again from the dead, and ascended before the eyes of his disciples into heaven,--these are the most essential points, the very gist and marrow of the New Testament. And these are all matters of simple fact. And, as with the New Testament, so still more strikingly with the Old. Creation, the Paradisaical state, the Fall, the Flood, the Dispersion of Nations, the Call of Abraham, the Deliverance out of Egypt, the Giving of the Law on Sinai, the Conquest of Palestine, the Establishment of David's kingdom, the Dispersion of Israel, the Captivity of Judah, the Return under Ezra and Nehemiah,—all these are of the nature of actual events, objective facts occurring at definite times and in definite places, conditioned, like other facts, perceptible to sense, and fitted to be the subject of historic record." G R.

The Bible, from its very commencement, is chiefly a revelation of God by being a faithful record of his actings in Creation and Providence, so that it has much more of an historical than a strictly dogmatic aspect. Another of its characteristics--and, indeed, a fundamental principle—is, that it does not submit its truths to

man's judgment. They are presented entirely on the authority of the Revealer, and so to be received or rejected according as that authority is recognized or disowned. D. M.——There are truths which cannot be either discovered or proved by any exercise of reason, whether direct or mediate--truths depending on the sovereign will and inscrutable counsels of the Omniscient mind ; truths which have no natural evidence, and can only be supernaturally revealed ; and in regard to these truths, we yield, not to *the authority of evidence*, for they are neither self-evident nor capable of rational proof, but to the *evidence of authority ;* we receive them simply on the testimony of the Revealer. *B. & F. Ev. Rev.* ——Revelation is at the core historical. It is embraced in a series of transactions in which men act and participate, but which are referable manifestly to an extraordinary agency of God, who thus discloses or reveals himself. The supernatural element does not exclude the natural ; miracle is not magic. Over and above teaching, there are laws, institutions, providential guidance, deliverance, and judgment. Here is the ground-work of Revelation. For the interpretation of this extraordinary and exceptional line of historical phenomena, prophets and apostles are raised up,--men inspired to lift the veil and explain the dealings of heaven with men. Here is the doctrinal or theoretical side of Revelation. These individuals behold with an open eye the significance of the events of which they are witnesses, or participants. G. P. F.

The Bible begins not with dogma, but with history. It says nothing of the being and attributes of God, but shows the Creator at work. It says nothing of religion, but shows the ancestors of mankind created in the image of God, and placed at the outset in moral relations of obedience and responsibility to their Creator. This is its method throughout. It gives us no religious teaching apart from particular persons, places, and events. Even the law of the Ten Commandments is recorded as matter of historical fact—uttered by a Divine Voice and afterward graven on stone tablets " with the finger of God.'' Yet the whole aim and meaning of these writings is religious. The story they tell is not that of human affairs, with a mingling of the supernatural, but of God's dealings with men. History is not made the medium of religious instruction. Religion is shown as the soul of history, the supreme reality and central power in human affairs, the deepest foundation of human life. While this keynote rings loud and clear throughout the Bible, it is struck in Genesis with unsurpassed boldness and truth. God is shown as the ultimate source of all being, preparing the earth from the beginning to be the home of man. Man's very existence is traced to God's purpose to realize his own likeness in human nature. Man is shown as conversant with God, as soon as he begins to know himself and the world around him. The foundations of marriage, property, labor, moral duty and responsibility, are all laid in God's revealed will, and man's conscious relation to his Maker. Moral evil, or sin, is represented as wilful disobedience to the known will of God. The tendency to evil is shown to be hereditary as well as personal, and teeming with seeds of increase. Human life is regarded as a whole ; and God is seen as the Ruler and Judge of mankind, as well as the personal Friend and Saviour of every one who fears and trusts him. *Faith*, as the mainspring and sheet anchor of the religious life ; *Prayer*, as direct personal intercourse with the unseen Father of spirits, and as actually heard and answered by him ; and *Divine Providence*, as regulating all human affairs from the greatest to the least, are so exemplified in these ancient Hebrew annals, that the story of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, possesses an unfading charm for Christian minds of the highest spiritual culture. They are typical for all time. No example of after ages has been able to cast them into the shade. *E. R. Conder.*

[Read Section 392, New Testament, Vol. 2.]

*Revelation Progressive.* Instead of making his entire revelation at once, through a single prophet, God preferred to speak at considerable intervals of time –through a long succession of " holy men of old ;'' " at sundry times and in diverse manners.'' By this *progressive method* God revealed himself to men, not simply by his *words* but by his *works*. In ways which men could not well mistake, he was thus able to manifest himself as the God of nations ; also as the God of families ; and not least, as the God of individual men. It was vital to human welfare that he should place himself before men as the All seeing, ever-active One, exercising a real government over men, ruling in equity and yet with loving-kindness ; ever present amid all their activities and impressing himself upon the thought and the heart of the race. In this line of policy how admirably did he give promises to his servants to inspire their faith in himself ; then prove that faith through years and ages of trial and delay ; but at last confirm his word by its signal fulfilment ! His providential rule over nations as such found in this method ample scope for the fullest illustration. The

record of this ruling in the ministrations of prosperity and adversity ; in the rise and the ruin of great nations through the lapse of the world's early centuries, constitute a marvellously rich portion of this progressive revelation of God to man. Yet further ; the progressive historical method of making up the Bible opened the door widely for miracles and prophecy. The occasions for miracles were multiplied. They could be introduced naturally where manifold and not single results should accrue. So also prophecy asks for *time*. On the supposition that the fulfilment is to appear in the Scriptures, an interval of some duration must come between the utterance and the fulfilment. On the supposition that God's scheme for the recovery of our lost race contemplated some atonement for sin—a provision in its very nature and relations toward both God and man exceedingly delicate and critical—it is at least presumable beforehand that God would bring out this idea with the wisest precaution against misconception, and with some foregoing illustrations of its significance and of its intended application. Precisely this we see in the great sacrificial system of the Mosaic economy. We put essentially the same idea into more general terms when we say that a protracted course of successive revelations provides for making an antecedent economy pave the way for a subsequent one--a first revelation preparatory to a second—one set of ideas imprinted and impressed upon the human mind, made conducive to other and higher revelations yet to follow. The wisdom of such progressions cannot fail to impress itself upon all thoughtful minds. H. C.

*The special revelation of God, since it enters the sphere of human life, observes the laws of historical development which are grounded in the general divine system of the world.* It does not at a bound enter the world all finished and complete ; but from a limited and relatively incomplete beginning, confining itself to one separate people and race, it advances to its completion in Christ in a gradual manner corresponding to the natural development of mankind, and guides that development into the path of the divine order of salvation, so as to communicate to man, by an historical process, the fulness of God which Christ bears in himself. And because revelation aims at the restoration of full communion between God and man, it is directed *to the whole of man's life.* It does not complete its work by operating either exclusively or mainly upon man's faculties of knowledge ; but constantly advancing, it produces and shapes the communion of God and man, as well by divine witness in word as by manifestations of God in the visible world, the institution of a commonwealth and its regulations, revelations of God within, the sending of the Spirit, and spiritual awakenings ; and all this so that a *constant relation exists between the revealing history of salvation and the revealing word,* inasmuch as each divine fact is preceded by the word which discloses the counsel of God (Amos 3 : 7) now to be completed ; and again, the word of God arises from the completed fact, and testifies thereto. For example, the flood is announced as a divine judgment—the threatening word precedes it ; and then, after the fact has taken place, a further word of God grows from it. This goes on down to the resurrection of our Lord. O. ——Any failure to perceive and to take due account of the great truth of the continuity and progressiveness of God's dealings with mankind, through successive dispensations of mercy, any disregard or forgetfulness of the essential coherence of the Old and New Testaments, of the Jewish and Christian Churches, involves a serious weakening of our grasp of Revelation as a whole, and of our sense of its grand historic reality as enshrined in the very being of the Jewish Race and of the Christian Church, and in the Literature of both. *Medd.*

## Section 3.

### THE BIBLE :

#### NOT OF MAN, BUT OF GOD.

*The Bible not of man.* The Bible is not such a book as man would have made, if he could ; or could have made, if he would. This is indicated by many traits of Scripture : 1. It utters from beginning to end a solitary but persistent and clamorous protest against the practice of idolatry, and everywhere maintains the doctrine of a sublime, elevated, uncompromising *mono-*

*theism.* The tendencies of human nature would seem to be all on one side, an inveterate proneness to idolatry ; the decisive voice of the Bible, and of this book alone, on the other. 2. Another most characteristic and prominent feature of the Bible, considered as a whole, is that it subordinates everything to the idea of God, and the claims of his universal and spiritual government. This exclusive reference to God is not found elsewhere among other nations, not even among the Jews themselves apart from these sacred writers. 3. Another peculiarity in the Bible, which makes the system of religion it propounds unique among the many propounded by men, is the strict subordination of ethics to theology. Its foundations are laid in the idea of God and our relations to him ; its sanctions are derived from his will. The great commands of the "Second Table" are here ultimately based on the relations in which all creatures stand to him who demands our homage in the "First Table." 4. Another paradoxical feature of the Scriptures, Old and New Testament alike, one not to be expected in any religion devised by man, is their reticence in relation to the future and invisible world. This abstinence is "not after the manner of men ;" for the human mind instinctively yearns for light on the darkness of the future life, and this yearning is amply met in the religions of undoubted human origin. 5. A final point is the difficulty of imagining how human nature should spontaneously have given such a picture of *itself* as we find in the dogmatic statements of the Bible. There every soul of man is charged with a total failure in the primary and cardinal obligations of a rational and moral nature, those we owe to God. Men are described as universally and by nature opposed to God, alienated from him, and therefore as exposed to his wrath. These are not the colors which human nature would spontaneously employ in painting itself. 6. We may add, that when man proceeded, as he has so often done, to modify or corrupt the religion of the Bible, it has always been in the direction and "after the similitude" of those religious systems which have his own signature upon them ; till at last Judaism under the Jews and Christianity under the Christians were so far assimilated to the religions man had incontestably invented, that it has not always been easy to discern the difference. *Henry Rogers.*——Nothing shows more strongly the fact of some divine supervision of the Bible than the absence of any scientific or philosophic language, or of a style assuming to be that of any special thinking, such as has characterized those who have assumed to be religious teachers in all ages. A divine wisdom is here ; something that has kept the Scriptural writers from thus compromising the wondrous book of which, through the ages, they have been the human media of transmission. T. L.

What secured the perfection of development manifest in the plan of the Bible in which the law, the history, the rites and ceremonies and liturgies of worship, the prophecies, and the life, death, and doctrines of Christ are indissolubly one? Who fitted the life of Christ into the framework prepared by the Old Testament history? Unaided human agency could not have done it. The arch of unity which the Bible contains stretches across too many centuries, and rises too high, to be the work of man. We might better suppose that St. Peter's at Rome assumed its symmetrical proportions through the unsuperintended work of an army of stonemasons than to suppose the grand and imposing symmetry of the Bible was the result of the work of forty men laboring, in as many half centuries, without the superintendence of the divine power. Scarcely a single one of other ancient writers is free from mistakes when touching at any length upon historical and geographical references. Why, unless the Holy Spirit granted them aid, should these forty men stand the criticism of modern discoverers better than any other one man who wrote at any length upon similar themes? What kept these forty religious writers, in as many half centuries, from dragging into their books as essential elements of them the crudities of the philosophy and physical science of their times? If history teaches anything it teaches that the temptation for religious founders to dogmatize upon the phenomena of the physical world is well-nigh irresistible. In the light of what other religious founders have done, the chances are a million to one that forty men writing in such diverse periods, would have disfigured their work in a similar manner with crude and silly speculations, had they not been guided by a superior intelligence. Again, What kept these forty writers so uniformly from fulsome flattery of their heroes? They give histories of Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, of a long list of kings of Israel and Judah, professedly the chosen instruments of the Lord in developing his plan of redemption ; yet they cover up no sin of their heroes—gloss over no baseness of character. G. P. W.

If the orchestral rendering presupposes behind it one creative mind that wrought the oratorio ; and if the cathedral at Cologne, that oratorio in stone, implies the workings of a

single genius, drawing walls and towers and spires into ripening grace and proportion, along the tired process of the centuries, will not the Holy Word, that finest music of the heart, that sublimest temple of thought, require for its composition the presidency of a single genius, able to impress with his own thought, and inspire with his own mind, every workman that wrought upon it? C. H. P.

From the Talmud and the Targums we know the temptation the Jewish rabbis were under to multiply rules and speculations till their very size should make them unwieldy and useless. From the writings of Christian commentators on the Bible,—early, mediæval, and modern,—we know how surely man of his own accord loads the truth so heavily with his speculations that it sinks altogether in the sea of forgetfulness. In repeated instances the truth has been so deeply buried beneath frivolous notes, insipid exhortations, that the labor of unearthing it from these voluminous works of the commentators is appalling. These characteristic and centrifugal tendencies when operating in the human mind we know. But we discover in our Sacred Scriptures evidences of another tendency, revealing the presence of a power from without modifying in a peculiar manner the movements of those minds that wrote the books of the Bible. G. F. W.

The gradual framing of the Bible through a period of fifteen hundred years excludes human supervision. The Bible as a whole is a result or an effect in the universe, and it must have had an adequate cause, which, since the result is an intelligent one, must have been an intelligent cause: there is the ontological argument, and it proves a superhuman intelligent cause for the Bible. It consists of orderly arranged parts, of an orderly developed scheme: there is the cosmological argument, and again it proves the activity of an intelligent cause of at least fifteen hundred years' duration. It is itself a cause of marvellous effects in the world for the production of which it is most admirably designed, and its whole inner harmony and all its inner relations are most deeply graven with the marks of a design kept constantly before some intelligent mind for at least fifteen hundred years: there is the argument from design, attaining equally far-reaching and cogent conclusions as in the realm of nature. *Warfield.*

*Divine-human in its Origin.*

In the Church and in the Bible alike God works through men. As we follow the progress of their formation, each step seems to be truly human; and when we contemplate the whole, we joyfully recognize that every part is also divine. *B. F. Westcott.*—In the laws of inspiration God has exercised the same care for human freedom that is displayed in all other divine adjustments. So jealous is the divine mind of the integrity of that inclosure within which a human mind is itself a *creator*, that even in the anomaly of inspiration, the human mind is not automatic. In the process of constructing a revelation the inspired mind is left to act out itself. *A. Phelps.*

Of the record of Revelation there are three conceivable ways: (1) God might have written it with his own finger, as on Moses' table of stone. (2) God might have used an amanuensis, making him the pen or instrument of revelation (3) God might have taken man as he made him, and used him as the free, spontaneous agent of his revelation, under his guidance. This is infinitely more God-like. Let it be carefully noted, the Bible in matter and form is the word of God. Yet it is just as human a book as ever was written, as Jesus Christ was truly human. The language is human. The thoughts are human—that is, under the limits of human thought. God is omniscient, but the Bible is not omniscient. The Bible is under the conditions of human thought and emotion, language and logic. Each writer wrought *suo motu*, as the bird sings. The spontaneous workings of genius are seen in the Bible as truly as in Southey or Milton. Just as free, just as spontaneous, just as human. The Bible looks at things as men look at them, not at the essence, but at the phenomena, because it was for men. The tremendous problem that it had to solve is seen in the fact that it was to speak to mankind for all time. In the inspiration of the Bible God's work was fourfold: (1) Providential. He made the man for the Book; Isaiah for prophecy, David for the Psalms, Paul for the Epistles. He built the languages, Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, and prepared a literature and language and men for it. (2) Sanctification. The work of the Spirit on David prepared him to furnish a typical religious experience. (3) Revelation. The special gift of additional knowledge. (4) Divine guidance in inspiration, so that exactly what God would have written was written. Illumination, revelation, inspiration differ in that illumination does not communicate new truth, only enables to understand the truth already given; revelation gives new truth; inspiration is the divine guidance to preserve the record from error. The result is, the Bible *contains*, and the Bible *is*, the word of God. Some hold

that the Bible only contains the word of God. But the whole Christian church declares the Bible is, not merely *contains*, the word of God. The whole Bible is inspired. Every book is inspired. Every element is inspired. The whole word of God is absolutely free from error in word and statement. This is the testimony of specialists. *A. A. Hodge.*

If asked where and how the divine has entered this divine-human book, we must reply: "Everywhere, and in almost every way conceivable." Throughout the whole preparation of the material to be written and of the men to write it; throughout the whole process of the gathering and classification and use of the material by the writers; throughout the whole process of the actual writing,—we see at work divine influences of the most varied kinds, extending all the way from simply providential superintendence and spiritual illumination to direct revelation and inspiration. *Warfield.*—— It is the Divine breath in these old Scriptures that has filled them so full of life; it is the Divine voice of authority, sounding in every page, that has given them this wonderful and otherwise inexplicable clearness. It is because it is "the Word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, reaching even to the dividing of soul and sense, the joints and the marrow, a critic both of the *thinkings* and the *ideas* of the heart." "It is the lamp of the Lord, which like the breath of man" (in the physical organization), "searches all the inward chambers of" the soul (Prov. 20 : 27). Add to this what has been so much insisted on, the intense humanity of the Old Scriptures, and we have another reason why this very ancient and most peculiarly Oriental tongue so vividly pours out its thought, and is so translatable, into the most remotely varying languages of the modern Western world. T. L.

We read in the 2d Epistle to Timothy 3 : 15, 16 : "The holy *scripta* able to make thee wise unto salvation," and "Every scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine." From these expressions we gather the following order of doctrine concerning the origin and character of the Bible. 1. It is given by inspiration of God. 2. It is first holy; second, able to make wise unto salvation; and, third, profitable for doctrine and other purposes of edification. It is a *writing*, not a writer, of which the character is here given. It is that piece of composition which the human author has put into a written form which is described as inspired. By the inspiration of the Almighty, the human author is made to perceive certain things divine and human, to select such as are to be revealed, and to record these with fidelity in the natural order and to the proper end. The result is a writing given by inspiration of God, with all the peculiarities of man, and all the authority of God.

Rev. 2 : 1. "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus, *write*." Here the Lord dictates, and John writes. The *mode* in which this takes place is not our concern; the *fact* is. The thoughts, purposes, commands, doctrines, promises of God, pass through the channel of John's mind, and come to expression by his tongue or by his pen. Hence the Scriptures are for the matter and the form in one respect the Word of God,—displaying the unity, harmony, and infallibility of its lofty source,—and in another respect the word of man—exhibiting all the peculiarities of his mother tongue and his individual mind. The simple development of this proposition will explain all those phenomena of Scripture by which it proves itself to be in the primary sense the Word of God, and at the same time, in the secondary sense, the word of the actual writer. M.

The Bible records first, those truths directly and immediately imparted to the mind of the writer by God, and which he could have learned in no other manner; and second, those events that occurred before the writer's own observation, and of sayings that fell upon his own ear. Inspiration touches the written accounts of them both, and it is the same for them both. Its province is to secure accuracy in the transmission of truth, whether that truth be a revelation directly received from God, or the history of something which has occurred before the eyes of men on earth. Hence though the whole Scripture is inspired, it does not stamp with divine authority every sentiment which it reports as uttered by the men of whom it speaks, or mark with divine approval every action which is related in it as performed by those whose biographies it contains. In the Book of Job, for example, inspiration gives with equal accuracy the language of Jehovah, the words of Satan, and the speeches of Job and his three friends; but it does not therefore place them all on the same level of authority. Only when he who speaks is speaking in God's name, and is a recognized prophet or apostle, have we any right to regard his utterances as of divine authority. This distinction between revelation and inspiration must be clearly understood, for some of the most plausible objections to the common theory have arisen from the fact that by many it has been either unrecognized or ignored.

We must also distinguish between inspiration and verbal dictation. The Holy Spirit did not employ the writers as copying machines. He used the men themselves, and spoke through their individuality to others. He wrought in and with and through their spirits, so as to preserve their individuality, while yet he transmitted his truth. The gold was his ; the mould was theirs. It affected the words not directly and immediately by dictating them in the ears of the writers, but mediately, through working on their minds, and producing there such vivid and clear ideas of thoughts and facts, that the writers could easily find words fitted to their purpose. The Spirit employed the attention, the investigation, the memory, the education, the fancy, the logic, in a word, all the charac teristics of the writer, and wrought through these. While from the divine side the Holy Spirit gave through men clearly and faithfully that which he wished to communicate, from the human side that communication came forth in language such as the men themselves would naturally have chosen. W. M. T.

Two elements coexist in the sacred records—the human and the divine. "Holy men of old spake"—there is the human ; "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost "--there is the divine. Very instructive here is the resemblance between the combination of the divine and human in the person of Christ and in the Holy Scriptures. Both are expressly called by the sacred writers the Word of God ; the first is the Word incarnate, the last is the Word written. Again, the manifestation of both proceeded from the Holy Ghost : the first by the way of a miraculous conception, the other by the way of a supernatural inspiration. Next, the Son of God came down from above and took upon him human nature ; even so saving truth was revealed from heaven, and was embodied in human language. Further, in the one person of our Lord two whole, perfect, and entire natures were inseparably joined together in one person without conversion, composition or confusion ; in like manner the Bible is one book, only one, wherein the two elements are inseparably combined in such manner that the divine does not absorb the human, nor does the human adulterate the divine. In Christ the two natures are so related that he is at once the Son of God and the Son of Man : in the Scriptures the two elements coexist in such fulness that the whole book is God's Word and the whole is man's word. In neither case are we able to explain the mode of union, but we may not solve the problem by rejecting either of its conditions. *E. P. Humphrey.*——The structure of the Bible is closely analogous to the structure of the Person of our Lord. Those who have wrong views of the Person of Christ will naturally also have wrong views of the Word of God. The Bible is absolutely divine in its spirit, yet truly human in its body. In it the Holy Ghost is incarnate, as in Christ Jesus the Son of God is incarnate. It is God's Word mediated through man. Both the Bible and Christ in their divine character are called the Word of God, and in both perfect divinity and perfect humanity are inseparably conjoined. There is nothing divine in the Bible which is isolated from true humanity, and nothing human in the Bible separated from true divinity. So that though we recognize the elements as distinct, we receive them as inseparable. If therefore we recognize the supernatural origin and divine authority of the Word of God, and possess the graces of humility and docility, and are earnest in our search after truth, we have at least a few of the necessary qualifications for a proper prosecution of the study of God's Word. *Weidner.*——The written word of God, like the Word which became flesh, must needs be human in its manward aspect : for the written word is divine thought manifest in human *language* as Christ was God manifest in human *flesh*. As the compound personality of Christ was conditioned by the flesh, so the compound character of a written revelation is conditioned by the nature of language. As God in becoming incarnate did not take upon him the form of angels, but of the seed of Abraham, so the written revelation is not sent in a form adapted to heavenly beings, but in a form suited to men. And it is in this that the perfection of the word of God consists. It *is* adapted to men. G. F. W.

The scriptures then are, in the fullest sense, the inspiration of God. It is God, the Saviour, using the machinery of human nature—its intellect, emotions, will, fashions of thought and organs of utterance—through which to express to man his infinite concern for him, and his method of saving him. As these utterances of God extended through different ages and civilizations the speech varies in its forms, according to the varieties of thought and speech which the humanity assumed to itself in its progress through the ages. For so thoroughly human in its form was God's speech designed to be, that it moulded itself in the successive forms into which humanity moulded its thought and speech in the different eras. Hence the scriptures became so thoroughly divine thoughts, moulded so thoroughly in human forms of ex-

pression. And the Bible, while a divine book, is, at the same time, the most thoroughly human book in the world. Flexible thus to mould itself, during the process of its utterance to the varying phases of human thought in successive ages, the divine thought, as soon as its utterance was completed and the revelation closed, became in its turn a power that moulded the thought and speech of all the successive ages and civilizations since, to its own form of thought and fashion of utterance. So that now the Bible stands forth before the modern ages neither a curious petrifaction—a fossil of a divine human organism that once lived and breathed, ages ago, nor a statue—cold, rigid and lifeless, however beautiful—carved by science out of the primeval rock, but a living and breathing human expression of the thoughts of "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." S. R.

Every reasonable man finds the Holy Scriptures of so venerable antiquity, and discerneth in them such stamps of divinity in the majesty of their style, the purity of the matter, the sublimeness and spirituality of the propositions contained in them, the self-denial of the penmen, the heavenliness of the scope, and the end of those Sacred Writings, the harmony of the parts, the seal of miracles, and principally in the mighty power and efficacy of them upon the souls and consciences of multitudes, both for conviction, and for support, and consolation, that he easily concludes, "this is the voice of God and not of man." *Poole.*

*Evidence from the supernatural of the Bible.* As Jehovah to Thor, as the Holy One of the Prophets to Vishnu, as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to Zeus, as the Hebrew Prophecy to the Grecian Epic, as the Psalms of David to the Odes of Pindar, as Moses to Minos, as that unique drama in which powers earthly and unearthly are striving for the integrity of Job to the myths of the Æschylean tragedy, as the idea of "Covenant" to the idea of Fate, as the idea of a Messiah to the idea of a Hercules, as the Olympic games to the "Fight of Faith," so is the sublime supernatural of the Bible to the monstrous, impure, or merely fanciful conceptions of the heathen. The difference is everywhere,—in the essential reason, in the inward spirit, in the outward form. He that hath eyes to see must see it; he that hath a soul to feel must understand it. We could ask no higher earthly evidence of the unearthliness of the Christian Scriptures than just this parallel. They are not merely arbitrarily selected points. As in the examples cited, so is it with the supernatural of the Bible everywhere. It is never monstrous, grotesque, legendary, unmeaning, fanciful, but ever dignified, solemn, pure, holy, in strictest keeping with every accompanying emotion, and so preserving that marvellous air of fact, that feeling of truthfulness, that sober impression of reality, ever present in the most astounding as in the most ordinary narrations of the Scriptures.

*The translatableness of the Scriptures.* They "try the reins;" "they reveal unto man his thought;" "they teach wisdom in that hidden part" where each individual spirit finds its connection, its identity, we might almost say, with the universal humanity. Hence it is that no book is so translatable as the Bible. It runs with the least difficulty into all languages, East or West. When it fails to meet with idioms that are perfect equivalents, it will always be found that its own may be successfully transplanted, and that they will grow with surprising freshness and vigor in the new soil. Hence no so ready a way to enrich a language as to translate the Bible into it. We are not aware how many of our own most *life-like* idioms are in fact orientalisms thus introduced into our remote Western world. The reason of this may be sought in the seeming paradox before alluded to. It is the "*Living Word,*" "the Word of God, quick and powerful," yet clothed in humanity; and hence it is so intensely human because it is the divine in the human. T L.

### *Minor Questions and Objections.*

In old times God spoke unto the fathers through the prophets, "by divers portions and in divers manners." We are not seriously concerned with the question whether a portion of Scripture is made authoritative by the direct suggestion of the Spirit to the writer, or by a superintendence which keeps the writer from incorporating what is essentially erroneous and misleading. The important question is, Is the Bible perfect as related to the end it has in view? viz., to provide the world with a permanently adequate, authoritative, and intelligible historical record of the supernatural revelation of himself made in connection with the incarnation of Christ? In thus viewing the question we shall find little difficulty in understanding the subject, so far as our duty and welfare are concerned. G. F. W.

There is no title that is not conveyed by words. By words are the institutions of mercy and education about us shaped. By words our great political safeguards are constructed. The words of the *habeas corpus* statute operate, wherever it

is in force, to check arbitrary arrests. The words of the Bill of Rights attached to the Constitution of the United States, and of its several amendments, secure to each citizen of the United States protection in his civil relations; and through these words flow what we may venture to call grace from the people collectively as the source of power to the people individually as the enjoyers of rights. It is irrational, therefore, to denounce the Protestant view of the Bible as unduly assigning grace to words, when it is through the grace of words that we hold whatever rights we enjoy. Yet, on the other hand, it is equally irrational to talk of the words in the sacred text as though they transcended criticism, were insoluble by time, and operated mechanically and not dynamically. The divine revelation is just what we should suppose it would be, judging from the analogies of human law. Its words may sometimes be ambiguous. They are open to the modifications of time. There may be always a question as to what objects they apply. Yet through these words grace flows *F. Wharton.*

The possession of inspiration was no proof of the personal holiness of him who had it. Balaam was inspired, and Saul prophesied with the students at Ramah, and so we must distinguish between the inspiration and the holiness of the man. All gifts are not graces. Inspiration is a gift, sanctification is a grace. The one is no guarantee of the other. Obvious as this distinction is, it has been often overlooked. W. M. T.

There is an attitude that is more irrational, if not more irreverent, than that of either scoffing or scowling unbelief. It is that of the men who profess to regard the Scriptures as in some sense inspired, in some sense a revelation, and yet with an express or tacit reserve that most of these "sacred writings," *Sacræ Scripturæ*, as they conventionally style them, are already obsolete, and the remainder fast becoming obsolete in the advancing light of the world. There are others who profess a more cordial reception, perhaps, yet would they maintain that this respect is due to the thoughts, the "great truths" as they deferentially say, while the style, the words, the images, are "accommodations" merely, and, therefore, to be dispensed with by that higher thinking that can think of God as well, if not better, without them. But instead of looking over or under these "accommodations," or pretending to *see through* them, it is still our wisdom to sit down to the volume of revelation, and bring our heads and hearts in closest communion with this Divine language, until its hidden life-giving power shall flow over into our dead, dark, earthly souls.

Hence the plain position so essential to all earnest Biblical study is, that the very language of Scripture is specially and most efficiently designed for our moral and spiritual instruction. If it is theopneustos, truly heaven-breathed, "then is it all profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for education in righteousness." "Thy word, O Lord, is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." "The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding" "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The soul that feels this, and acknowledges this, has the ground of a true exegesis. Hence to believe in his heart that it truly is *Sacred Scripture*, and that, therefore, every word of it is pure, every word of it holy (so far as we can hold it to be the genuine text or word of God), is the first great requisite of an interpreter. Without this idea, though the writing may be valuable and interesting in other respects, yet the laborious comment which even the rationalists bestow upon it becomes a mockery and an absurdity. It is true, one cannot be a good interpreter, or the best interpreter, without linguistic and archæological knowledge. On the other hand and with still greater boldness, may it be said of all Biblical interpretation that has not the unction of a hearty faith, that though it may be a blind aid to something higher than itself, yet in itself, and for itself, it is as worthless as "the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal." The onward march of the human mind shall consign it to oblivion. Neither in the world nor in the Church shall it ever have that post of honor which belongs to what is called genius in the one, or is prized as productive of holiness or spirituality in the other. T. L.

*Proof of Inspiration.* [For full treatment read Sect. 396, N. T., vol. 2.]

Briefly stated, the evangelical theory of the inspiration of the Bible rests upon the fourfold fact: *a.* That Christianity is essentially supernatural, involving the incarnation of the Second Person of the divine Trinity, and his miraculous entrance into, and miraculous exit from, the world. This removes antecedent objections. *b.* It is appropriate and important, not to say necessary, that the record of such a divine intervention in history should be adequate, and free from essential error, lest the intervention itself should fail to accomplish its end. This

makes the fact of inspiration antecedently probable. *c.* Such emphatic promises of assistance were given by Christ to the apostles and their associates, upon whom would come the responsibility of recording the facts and unfolding the doctrines essential to Christianity, that we look to find these promises fulfilled in the writings of the apostles. *d.* The repeated assertion by certain of the writers of the New Testament, that they wrote by divine authority, coupled with the fact that in all their writings and conduct they both assume and assert that the Old Testament is the inspired Word of God, compels us to accept large portions of the New Testament as inspired or reject it altogether. The opinion of the Old Testament entertained by the writers of the New, becomes the standard by which we are to measure the estimate set upon the books of the New Testament by the primitive church. A little reflection will show that the churches of the first and second centuries were the proper judges and the natural guardians of the earliest Christian records, and that the testimony which they have borne to the records we have is not easily contradicted or disturbed.

Christ and the apostles attest in superabundant measure the divine authority of the Old Testament. This they do (*a*) by directly adopting the views current at the time as to the sacredness of the Old Testament Scripture ; (*b*) by repeatedly making various portions of it their final appeal in argument ; (*c*) by direct assertions that portions, at least, of the Scripture were the direct word of God, or were spoken by the Holy Spirit ; (*d*) by refraining from attempts to correct or criticise any portion of the Scripture then held sacred, though freely criticising the traditional views of their times. This establishes the divine authority of the Old Testament. To establish the authority of the books of the New Testament we have to prove that they were either written or indorsed by apostles, or, at any rate, that they correctly represent apostolic teachings and originated in apostolic times. They then become invested with the authority of the apostolic commission. A sufficient proof of such investiture of authority is that they were so received by the primitive church, who knew both the apostles and their doctrines, and who with the standard of Old Testament authority before them exalted the New Testament to a co-ordinate place with the Old. The repeated, emphatic, and exclusive appeal by the New Testament writers to the Old Testament Scriptures as when properly understood of divine authority, is the more impressive when we consider the manner in which the Old Testament writers both assume and assert their own divine commission. In numberless instances the writers of the Old Testament assume to speak in the name of the Lord. The evidence that sustains the Scriptures as a whole gives weight to every detached portion. The testimony of Christ and the apostles to the authority of the Old Testament, their acceptance of it as the word of God, in the sense in which the Jews accepted it, is the strongest direct proof we can have of the divine authority of the Old Testament. And the promise to the apostles that the Holy Spirit should speak through them, and the acknowledgment by the apostolic church of the books of the New Testament as of equal authority with the Old Testament, is the most weighty direct testimony we can have that the New Testament is a revelation from God. Each particular part that is proved to be genuine has the weight of authority which is accredited to the whole. As the apostle says : " Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." . . . A miraculous dispensation begins with Abraham and ends with the apostles,—with an intermission of about four hundred years between Malachi and John the Baptist. All the books of the Bible are supposed, on good grounds, to have been written during these two periods of special miraculous intervention. G. F. W.

The account the Scriptures give of themselves has a presumption in its favor until evidence be produced to prove them unauthentic or spurious. Positive evidence against them there is none, and in the nature of the case can be none unless a rival history of equal or greater antiquity could be discovered. The arguments against their veracity and antiquity are all indirect, of the nature of objections. On the other hand, the evidence in favor of the immemorial tradition of the Hebrew nation as to their authorship is positive, and of immense value ; consisting in the structure and contents of the books themselves. Further, it is impossible to give any satisfactory account of them if they be forgeries. And it is a sound rule of both common-sense and criticism, that when positive evidence is conclusive even insoluble difficulties cannot overthrow it. *E. R. Conder.*

# Section 4.

## THE BIBLE:

### 1. ITS FITNESS TO HUMAN CONDITIONS AND NEEDS.

THE actual revelation, being designed for all men and for all times, must be its own guarantee; its authority must be inherent, inseparable from its contents; it must win its way because it is worthy of God, and fitted to man's needs. The revelation of God is found in the essential, living thought of the Bible; and the final proof of its authority must be sought in its living energy, in its agreement with the character of God, with its own successive utterances, and with our conscious intuitions, presentiments, needs and hopes. Coleridge's famous statement, "In the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit," has been quoted and enforced to discredit the secondary evidences for the inspiration of Scripture; but the words are full of golden wisdom. Practically, and for the great mass of its readers, the Bible is inspired and authoritative, because it finds them, probing their conscious life to its very sources. We believe it to be from God because its utterances are Godlike, consistent with themselves, and fitted to establish in the hearts of men that Divine kingdom, whose fruits are righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And we have gained very much when we see that criticism cannot possibly touch the question of the authority of the Bible, since that is patent and assured, in whatever way the books and the institutions of the Bible may have been produced. *Behrends.*

All history bears witness to the truth of the Bible. Type and Prophecy yield their solemn attestation. The spectacle of a world submitting itself to the doctrines of the Bible, and thereby becoming remodelled, is in itself a system of evidence which can only be accounted for in one way. The Bible has addressed itself sucessfully to men of every age and every clime. It has evoked the profoundest utterances of piety, and wisdom, and learning. Its unearthly power is proclaimed by the loftiest and the most lowly. Its adaptation to the wants of man is as extraordinary as its texture is unique and its appearance unpromising. Our very spirits within us bear emphatic witness that the Bible is a message sent from God. *Burgon.*

An historical revelation of the nature, character, and purposes of God must of necessity be many-sided, or it would not be adapted to the varying conditions of the human race. It must meet the wants of the ages to which it is first given, and at the same time be couched in such language and presented in such form that future ages shall be able to extract its meaning. The written word of God must have points of attachment adapting it to use among rude and barbarous tribes, and at the same time must be so full of meaning, so perfect in its form, and so sublime in its outlook, as to satisfy the wants of the most cultivated ages. In the same storehouse we must find both milk for babes and meat for strong men. The truth must be preserved in such plain precepts and bold outlines as shall justify the assertion that "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." At the same time revelation must lead on from glory to glory, and securely and wisely conduct the race forward toward the ever-widening horizon of eternity. G. F. W.——All its great truths are universal truths; truths capable of reaching and making entrance into and taking a strong hold upon the heart of man as man, and of all men equally, independently of their race-affinities, intellectual advancement or social standing. It is a book which naturally and without effort betrays acquaintance with the deepest reaches of modern discovery, and yet in its every accent speaks home to the child as readily as to the sage. And its asserted truths are instinctively recognized by man as actual truths. The Bible thus certainly comes with a message to man—one that is recognized by each man who needs its words as specially for him, and that is witnessed to instinctively by each as true. How does it happen that this book, alone among books, reaches the heart alike of the Bushman and of a Newton? of a savage lost in the horrors of savagery and of a Faraday sitting aloft on the calm and clear if somewhat chill heights of science? *Warfield.*

The Scriptures adapt themselves to the common knowledge and thinking, and common imagination, of all men. This is felt the more

the book is studied and understood. The effect indeed may be heightened by the elucidating labors of the scholiast and the archæologist; all such clearing of the letter does, for the spiritual mind, add to the spiritual power; but without such helps, or with the scantiest supply of them, and in the poorest translation ever made, it has a fountain of living thought never failing in its rich suggestiveness for the devout unlearned, and never exhausted by any amount of research on the part of the profoundest scholar.

There is another aspect still of this remarkable universality. Not only is the Bible adapted to all ages, to all peoples, to all individuals; it also addresses itself to the most special circumstances of each single soul. It is all true, the picture that Burns has drawn of the holy influence of the Bible by the cotter's humble hearth; it is all true, what we often hear, of its transforming power over the illiterate. No other book does this; but the Bible, wherever it goes, is ever followed by some examples of this strange effect. But much more than this is true. Men profoundly learned in the Scriptures, and in all that wide field of knowledge that relates to them, have not been prevented by their critical and philological investigations from feeling the same quickening spiritual energy of the Word. Bible scholars like Usher, classical scholars like Erasmus, philosophers like Bacon, divines like Edwards, metaphysicians like Leibnitz and Hamilton, men of loftiest scientific as well as spiritual insight like Pascal, men of highest human culture like Wilberforce and Guizot, have sought knowledge, not merely historical, or literary, or speculative, but soul-saving knowledge, from this fountain so full and running over for all. As the child sits down to learn his lesson from the lips of a beloved teacher, so have they betaken themselves to the study of the Scriptures, with the deep conviction that in their human was to be found the superhuman and the divine. Given by the divine Mind, these holy books must have in them a depth and a fulness of meaning that the human intellect can never exhaust. If they are holy books, then can there be thrown away upon them no amount of study, provided that study is ever chastened by a sanctified, truth-loving spirit, that rejoices more in the simplest teaching, and in the simplest method of teaching from God, than in the most lauded discoveries of any mere human science. Is it in truth the word of God—is it really God speaking to us? then the feeling and the conclusion which it necessitates are no hyperboles. We cannot go too far in our reverence, or in our expectation of knowledge surpassing in kind, if not in extent. The wisdom of the earth, of the seas, of the treasures hidden in the rocks and "all deep places," of the subterranean world, or of the stars afar off, brings us not so nigh the central truth of the Heavens, the very mind and thought of God, as one parable of Christ, or one of those grand prophetic figures through which the light of the infinite idea is converged, while, at the same time, its intensity is shaded for the tender human vision. T. L.

Within the compass of the same faith is milk for babes and strong meat for men—plain truths, simple enough for the loving comprehension of a child, and mysteries high and deep enough to overtask the powers of an archangel. But the two cannot be sharply separated from each other. The man in his strong grasp of the broad truths of saving love, exercises the humility of the child; and the child in the majesty of the revelation, rises into the maturity of the man. *Garbett.*——Here is a book that can address itself to the reason of man and to the heart of woman, a book that has a voice and a message for all the different stages of life—from old age to middle age, youth, and childhood. Here is a book that is adapted to all the different divisions into which society is divided, by rank, and birth, and wealth, and fashion; a book that can permeate all the trades of men—the merchant, the mechanic, and the professional man; a book that suits the sailor that is tossing upon the sea just as well as it suits the scholar in the university; that suits the stunted man that works in a manufactory as well as the man of pleasure and wealth, that roams where he pleases and rifles all the sweets of life that he can gather; that fills the heart with happiness amid the sanctities of our Christian homes, and comforts the wanderer in a strange land; that gives its benediction to fast and festivity, to baptism and marriage; that ennobles life and tranquillizes death, and gives to man the hope of glory, which no human genius can bring. *M. D. Hoge.*

The faith meets every part of man. To supply his practical wants, to alleviate his sorrows, to remedy his ruin, to throw light upon his darkness, and make even the valley of Baca a threshold into glory, is its one all-pervading object. It comes like an archangel on an errand of mercy, and walks to and fro our world, a ministering spirit of light and joy. It does not disdain the earthly soil and earthly atmosphere, but imitates the Son of God Incarnate, as he brightened our earth with his smiles and con-

secrated it with his tears. The faith is in every part of it intensely practical. Doctrines are but the statement of God's mode of saving us. The faith reflects the perfections of its Author, as, like a cloudless sun, he fills the spiritual firmament with life and immortality. *E. Garbett.*——When the heart is borne down with sadness and enveloped in the shades of disappointment, there is no language like that of David or Jeremiah with which to give vent to the pent-up feelings. Or when joy and hope thrill the soul, there are none others that can equal Isaiah and the writer of the Revelation in jubilant songs of gladness. But for the Bible there could have been no Hallelujah Chorus. G. F. W.

I have read many books which teach and enlighten—which sometimes seem almost to be the medium of new revelations to the soul ; I have read the writings of great philosophers of old—of men who saw far deeper into the truth by the power of wonderful intellects, guided no doubt by God's providence, than it was possible for ordinary men to see. I have read many books which set before the soul the loftiest motives of action, and the most heavenly principles to guide the conduct. I have read many such books, and have felt that I have learned much ; and still there remains the sense that these books, though they are my teachers, are not my rulers, and though they instruct me they cannot command me. But when I turn to the Word of God, it takes me straight into God's very presence, and give its message there by an authority which is his and his alone. *Temple.*——It is enough to find out what the book actually says to my life, my heart, my conscience, and all my higher faculties, and to judge it, not by some official standard, but by the recognized and most solemn facts which make up human history. The Bible asks for no privilege in the matter of judgment : its bold appeal is to the highest court of immediate fact and experience. It is a book which knows us, puts our thoughts into words, fills up our need, and teaches us the only prayers which even God can answer. More Bible is what is wanted ; fuller reading of the book itself, and a much freer application of it to the facts of daily life. J. P.

### 2. ITS ACHIEVEMENTS AND EFFECTS.

For ages had the Jewish Scriptures been shut up in the mountains of Judæa There they had remained, a "garden enclosed, a fountain sealed," until "the everlasting doors were lifted up," and the commandment came that "the Law should go forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." How sudden, how irresistible the effect! How few the generations before this Chronicle of Redemption, this old Epic of "the Chosen People" and their Hero Messiah, together with those later yet still Jewish writings that contained the world-interpretation of the more ancient national covenant, filled and vivified all the literature, all the philosophy, yea, all the thinking of the vast Roman empire! How soon it modified, yea, completely transformed, that whole historical state out of which arose our modern Europe and our modern civilization! What divine energy was this, that so far surpassed all former powers that had arisen out of the Occidental mind, and might, therefore, be supposed so much better adapted to it? Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Socrates —Academics, Stoics, Rhetoricians, Moralists—*they* had never so stirred the world, *they* had touched no universal chords in human souls, although nothing could seemingly be more abstract, and, therefore, more universal, than the language of their precepts. Their speculations, though in appearance so general and so profound, did not, after all, reach down to that which underlies all human nature, as human nature, in its constitution and its wants. They had no Fall to tell of, no Redemption. The former might have been dimly shadowed in some of their poetic myths, but the latter had no place in their philosophy. The world was caring little about them or their systems ; it was fast sinking into darkness, with all the light they gave ; it was becoming more corrupt, more worthless, with all they said about the excellency of virtue and the dignity of reason ; more deformed and false, with all their talk about the "true, the beautiful, and the good." But when Christ and Moses came, when the prophets came, and he of whom they wrote, when Evangelists and Apostles came, how mighty the change, and how soon did it manifest itself in so great a revolution of human ideas! Thus was it also in the Reformation age, after the whole Bible had for a second time been so long buried from the common mind. As when Hilkiah the priest discovered in the temple a copy of the law that the Lord had given unto Moses, so came forth the Scriptures from the cell of the Augustine monk. Men everywhere, great men and mean men, learned men and ignorant men, "wept and humbled themselves at the reading of the words of the book that was found." What a sudden activity did it give, not only to the religious, but to all the higher departments of thinking. How it quickened the age! How it made the theological and

the spiritual predominant everywhere, in the political, social, and even military life! How paradoxically, we may say, yet how truly, did this strangely human book, with its abounding anthropopathisms, engage the general mind in the highest heights of abstract speculation,—as though this very anthropopathism, more than any philosophical language, contained those hidden germs that must grow up evermore into the infinity of thought. T. L.

The *debt of literature to the Bible* is like that of vegetation to light. No other volume has contributed so much to the great organic forms of thought. It has the singular faculty of attracting to itself the thinkers of the world, either as friends or foes, always, everywhere. The works of comment upon it of themselves form a literature of which any nation might be proud. Here is a power, which, say what we may of its results, has set the Christian world to thinking, and has kept it thinking for nearly two thousand years. The unpublished literature of the Christian pulpit surpasses in volume all the literatures of all nations. . . . Our own language owes, in part, the very structure it has received to our English Bible. *A. Phelps.* — These books contain a body of history, poetry, and philosophy, the study of which has done more than any other single cause to modify the course and happiness of thinking men on the earth, and to color and direct the whole course of modern civilization. Great epochs in the history of the modern civilized world, such as the conversion of the northern tribes, the growth of the temporal power of the Church, the establishment of the monastic orders, the Crusades, the development of the Scholastic philosophy, the Reformation, the rise of Puritanism, are all attributable more or less directly to the one moral cause which we are now considering, the study of the Bible. It is not too much to say, that the Books of the Old and New Testament have exerted more influence, whether for weal or woe, on the course of human affairs among civilized nations than all other books put together. Their imprint is on most of the literature, the philosophy, the legislation, and the history, of the last 1700 years. *F. Bowen.*

The Bible now occupies a larger proportionate space in literature than ever it did. No book raises so many inquiries or touches so many interests. The Bible sends the student to libraries and archives. To the Bible we owe much of the intense and spreading interest in languages and in the originals of customs and of peoples. It directs the traveller to buried cities, to the tombs of kings, to the records of states once great, and well-nigh forgotten. Wherever the battle of opinion is now the liveliest, wherever the race for discovery is the most eager, wherever the earth at last reveals her buried history, it is to add to our knowledge of the sacred story, and to our understanding of the sacred volume. *London Times.*—Looking at great breadths of history, it is evident that the believers in the Avesta, the Veda, and even the Koran, have not been careful to create a system of world-wide propagation of their respective faiths. Little beyond a military spasm in the case of the last of them has been attempted in this direction. But the believers in the Bible have been impelled to translate it into all languages and to send it into all regions. The Bible has, as a mere matter of fact, forced its way where no other book has ever gone; and as for the variety of intellect which it has interested in its fortunes, no other writing can bear comparison with it. The coldest and the most ardent temperaments have alike sought to extend its influence: the richest learning and the most splendid eloquence have felt honored in its service, and the most valorous men have hazarded their lives to publish its contents in hostile lands. They have done this because of the effect of Bible teaching upon their hearts; necessity was laid upon them, and out of this necessity came their highest joy. Such facts show how true it is that the Bible so discloses its subjects as to claim the homage of all nations through all time. J. P.

The Bible is seen to tread the ages like the fabled goddess under whose beneficent footfall sprang beautiful flowers wherever she went. Hospitals and asylums and refuges for the sick, the miserable and the afflicted grow like heaven-bedewed blossoms in its path. War, if it does not cease, becomes so ameliorated as to be scarcely recognizable as war compared with the brutal outbursts of past ages. Captured cities are fed with the rations of the conquering army; captured combatants are tended with motherly care. Woman, whose equality with man Plato considered a sure mark of social disorganization, has been elevated; slavery has been driven from civilized ground; letters have been given by Christian missionaries, under the influence of the Bible and in order to its publication, to whole peoples and races. Who can estimate that boon? Thus Cyril and Methodius gave alphabet and written language to the vast hordes of the Sclaves; thus Ulphilas, to the whole race of Teutons; thus even Egypt, mother of letters, first received a manageable alphabet. Thus still to-day tribes and peoples sunk in

barbarism are being lifted by the Bible to the ranks of literary nations. So the work goes on, and still to-day, as ever before, the Bible stands in all the world exercising everywhere its immense power in the restraining of all evil passions, in the advancement of all that is good and tender and elevating, in pouring out benefits unspeakable to the individual and the state. *Warfield.*

No volume ever commanded such a profusion of readers, or was translated into so many languages. Such is the universality of its spirit, that no book loses less by translation—none has been so frequently copied in manuscript, and none so often printed. King and noble, peasant and pauper are delighted students of its pages. Philosophers have humbly gleaned from it, and legislation has been thankfully indebted to it. Its stories charm the child, its hopes inspirit the aged, and its promises soothe the bed of death. The maiden is wedded under its sanction, and the grave is closed under its comforting assurances. Its lessons are the essence of religion, the seminal truths of theology, the first principles of morals, and the guiding axioms of political economy. In the entire range of literature no book is so frequently quoted or referred to. The majority of all the books ever published have been in connection with it. The Fathers commented upon it, and the subtle divines of the middle ages refined upon its doctrines. It sustained Origen's scholarship and Chrysostom's rhetoric. It whetted the penetration of Abelard and exercised the keen ingenuity of Aquinas. It gave life to the revival of letters, and Dante and Petrarch revelled in its imagery. It augmented the erudition of Erasmus, and roused and blessed the intrepidity of Luther. The text of no ancient author has summoned into operation such an amount of labor and learning, and it has furnished occasion for the most masterly examples of criticism and comment, grammatical investigation, and logical analysis. It has also inspired the English muse with her loftiest strains. Its beams gladdened Milton in his darkness, and cheered the song of Cowper in his sadness. The records of false religion, from the Koran to the Book of Mormon, have owned its superiority, and surreptitiously purloined its jewels. Among the Christian classics it loaded the treasures of Owen, charged the fulness of Hooker, barbed the point of Baxter, gave color to the palette and sweep to the pencil of Bunyan, enriched the fragrant fancy of Taylor, sustained the loftiness of Howe, and strung the plummet of Edwards. In short, this collection of lives and letters has changed the face of the world, and ennobled myriads of its population. *No. Brit. Rev.*

The authors of the Bible were all connected with one small country and bound up in the people that dwelt in it. Their thoughts gathered round its history, and their writings are crowded with allusions to its hills and valleys, its streams and lakes and brooks, its towns and villages, even its individual trees, rocks, caves and gardens. In a sense it is a very local book, provincial, nay, parochial in its details; yet it has been accepted and adopted by all civilized nations; by some marvellous process of transformation it has become by far the most catholic book in the world. It has been translated into more than two hundred languages of the globe. Great societies exist for the sole purpose of multiplying versions and copies, which are produced in millions year after year. *W. G. Blaikie.*

If we trace the revelation which the Book sets forth as it gradually unfolds itself, we shall find that we are drawn away from letters to life; from sounds that are conveyed to the ear, to living words that are conveyed with mighty power to the conscience and the heart; from those words, to him who speaks them. *Maurice.*

The Bible is the only book that works. Other books sparkle, but this book lifts. Shakespeare does not unaidedly make men better. Cast into a community of savages, his plays would not carry barbarism by the breadth of a hair nearer civilization. Shakespeare does not sow the mind with new impulses, nor endue it with new energies. That is the prerogative of the Bible, and of books that have been directly inspired from it. Where the Bible is present the most operatively, there is the best civilization—witness America, Great Britain, Germany. "All that we call modern civilization," says Froude, "in a sense which deserves the name, is the visible expression of the transforming power of the Gospel." C. H. P.——It is the most educating book in the world to him who would master all its contents; it is the grandest power in civilization, by which inquiry is challenged and thought is stirred on every side, which becomes the germ of arts and sciences, of universities and libraries, of generous literatures, of social ameliorations and of enlightened governments. R. S. S.

Older than all human histories, it has come down to us leaving a thousand fallen empires in its track. It has foretold the ruin of Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, and yet it still survives. While nations, kings, philoso-

phies, systems, and institutions have died away, the Bible now engages men's attention, is studied by the keenest intellects, is reverenced by the purest hearts, keeps progress with the advancing civilization of the world, originates the institutions of philanthropy, imparts ideas of law and liberty, reforms and elevates the fallen, sustains the faith of those who rest upon it, and utilizes every new invention and discovery to overrun the earth. *An* ——It has dissolved the worse fetters of humanity, marked the line for ages between liberty and despotism, and has so gathered up in itself all the rudiments of the future and the seeds of advancement, that its eclipse would be the return of chaos, and its extinction the epitaph of history. The resistance of ages to this book is, however, its crowning legitimation. The Bible is too good for the race it has come to bless. It blesses them like an angel whose mission is peremptory, and it troubles too many waters in its work of healing to be left in peace. It is felt and feared by all the rulers of the darkness of this world. No feeble suffrage can augment the claims of a Book which has its claims below as signal as its fitness above, which numbers, to say nothing of nobler trophies, its hundred of millions of copies in circulation, and is going forth to the ends of the earth conquering and to conquer ; but to vindicate its majesty –against all doubters—as made in the image of God, with everything of humanity except its weakness, all its parts and lineaments shining with the lustre of the divine face, here more veiled, there more open, and an unction descending on it from the head to the skirts of the garment, this is an office as grateful to faith as it is welcome to reason. It is an altar which sanctifieth the meanest gift. And the worshipper may well be lost amid the myriads whose brightest hope, after walking by this oracle through life's darkness, is to reach that sanctuary of peace where reverence for the Highest is wounded by no discord, and where those who have been the last to believe will be the first to adore. *Caird.*

This Word of God has held a thousand nations for thrice a thousand years spellbound ; held them by an abiding power, even the universality of its truth ; and we feel it to be no more a collection of books, but *the* book. To enhance the marvellousness of this, remember that the nation from which it emanated was a despised people. For the last eighteen hundred years the Jews have been proverbially a by-word and a reproach. But that contempt for Israel is nothing new to the world, for before even the Roman despised them, the Assyrian and Egyptian regarded them with scorn. Yet the words which came from Israel's prophets have been the life-blood of the world's devotions. And the teachers, the psalmists, the prophets, and the lawgivers of this despised nation spoke out truths that have struck the key-note of the heart of man ; and this, not because they were of Jewish, but just because they were of universal application. This collection of books has been to the world what no other book has ever been to a nation. States have been founded on its principles. Its prayers, its psalms are the language which we use when we speak to God ; eighteen centuries have found no holier, no diviner language. If ever there has been a prayer or a hymn enshrined in the heart of a nation, you are sure to find its basis in the Bible. There is no new religious idea given to the world, but it is merely the development of something given in the Bible. The very translation of it has fixed language and settled the idioms of speech. Germany and England speak as they speak because the Bible was translated. F. W. R.

The Bible is, as Professor Tyndall says, the "unquestionable antecedent" of our whole civilization. It has determined the very forms of speech through which State, school and individual have poured their thoughts. The documents of diplomacy, judicial formulas, parliamentary routine, bear direct traces of Bible origin. The men who have seen deepest into the mystery of things and caught most of the prophetic breath of the coming morning, such as Bacon, Kepler, Newton, Faraday, and others, were earnest students of the Book in which they devoutly believed the heavens were truly reflected, and the earth's mysteries an "open secret." *J. B. Thomas.*——Here is the Bible—a book without preface and without index, which is to-day working such mighty wonders in the thinking and in the general culture and civilization of the globe—how do you account for it? J. P.

*Its power over the life.* Where is a second book, uninspired by Scripture, that has demonstrated its inherent and unassisted energy to take hold of life, grapple with it, transform it, regenerate it, and lead it out into the likeness of the life of God? Only he who knows *man* could have made *man* a book. Only he that made all hearts could produce a book that should go to the wants of all hearts. "I see," wrote Hallam, "that the Bible fits into every fold and crevice of the human heart. I am a man, and I believe that this is God's book because it is man's book." C. H. P.

It is the full and only explanation of the mystery of tune and the world in which I live, a mystery which no human wisdom could ever explain. I open the Bible and confusion becomes order and darkness light. I see the creating God, the sustaining Providence, the wise and all-controlling purpose, the glorious end. The law of right and truth written in this book is written also upon my own nature. Appealing with irresistible force to my reason and conscience, it is a Word of divine authority, before which my whole being is constrained to bow. It satisfies every longing of my immortal nature ; gives me the knowledge of God and of myself. It irradiates with clear and certain light the whole duration of my existence, in time and in the future beyond. It tells me all I need to know, and in it my soul is at rest. *E. L. Clark.*——It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten ; like the sound of church bells which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem often to be almost things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words ; it is the representative of his best moments ; and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good speaks to him forever out of his English Bible. *Faber.*——Christianity has abler advocates than its professed defenders, in those many quiet and humble men and women who in the light of it and the strength of it live holy, beautiful, and self-denying lives. The God that answers by fire is the God whom mankind will acknowledge ; and so long as the fruits of the spirit continued to be visible in charity, in self-sacrifice, in those graces which raise human creatures above themselves and invest them with the beauty of holiness which only religion confers, thoughtful persons will remain convinced that with them in some form or other is the secret of truth. *Froude.*

*Tested by experience.* Its consistency with right reason I consider as the outer court of the temple, the common area within which it stands. The miracles with and through which the religion was first revealed and attested I regard as the steps, the vestibule and the portal of the temple. The sense, the inward feeling in the soul of each believer of its exceeding desirableness, the experience that he needs something, joined with the strong foreboding that the redemption and the grace propounded to us in Christ, are what he needs—this I hold to be the true foundation of the spiritual edifice. But it is the *experience* derived from a practical conformity to the conditions of the gospel ; it is the opening eye, the dawning light, the terrors and the promises of spiritual growth, the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of sin hated as sin, and of the incapability of attaining either without Christ ; it is the sorrow which still rises up from beneath, and the consolation that meets it from above ; in a word, it is the actual trial of the faith in Christ, with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched roof, and faith itself is the completing keystone. *Coleridge.*——The love of God, the will to do His Will, the accompaniment of each approach toward even the barest thought of Him by a reverent longing, by the impulse of adoration, these are the first elementary conditions of any real knowledge of God. Where these are present the intellectual and spiritual vision of Truth, though necessarily imperfect as to both extension and intention, is clear in itself so far as it reaches, and in its gathering strength furnishes ever fresh motive and material for adoring love. *Medd.*——In order to the searching of the Scriptures, and the drawing therefrom of true Knowledge, there is need of a good life and a pure soul and the virtue that is according to Christ, in order that the mind, making its way thereby, may be enabled to attain and to apprehend the things after which it reaches forth, so far as it is possible for the nature of man to learn about God the Word. *Athanasius.*——Happy they who, while giving due weight to the historical evidences of the Canon, know the Bible true by an inward moral conviction and spiritual witness—who appreciate the character of its contents, "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God ;" the tone it has, which it has received from no other book, but with which it has influenced minds and books innumerable ; and its singularly penetrating living power over the human heart ! D. F.

*Tested by Prophecy.* We might point to the immense number of independent predictions, seemingly opposite, or even contradictory, to one another, before their fulfilment, found on the coming of Christ to be harmoniously gathered up and fulfilled in his unique personality and work—predictions covering not only the great outlines of his work and the marked traits of his person, but publishing ages beforehand the very village in which he should first see the

light, the homage on the one hand, and the abuse on the other, which he should receive, the life he should live and the death he should die, even to the most minute description of the pains he should suffer and the scoffs he should endure as he hung upon the tree—yea, even the exact price of his blood and fate of his betrayer. Or, again, we might point to that ever-living witness to the truth of prophecy in the Jewish race upon whom everything that has been prophesied has been and is being duly fulfilled; or, again, to an infinite multitude of minute details of predictions touching many races and nations which have with infinite might fulfilled themselves everywhere among men.

In prophecy, therefore, we have a continual miracle set in the midst of the Bible, to stand in all ages as a sure proof that it comes from God. As each prediction is in turn fulfilled before the eyes of each age which witnesses it, a miracle performs itself (and attests itself in the act) which is as cogent and sufficient evidence of the divine origin of the Bible as if all the miracles of the apostolical age were rewrought in our presence to reaffirm its teaching. Thus we see, in perhaps a new light, the meaning of our Lord's pregnant saying: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rise from the dead." *Warfield.*

*Compared with other Sacred Books.* There have been Sacred Books beside the Christian: the Hindu Vedas, Brâhmanas, Upanishads, Sûtras; the Buddhist Pitakas, Vinaya, Sutta, and Abhidhamma; the Chinese books; the Persian Avesta, the Koran. These have been made familiar in Christendom by the labor of Christian scholars, often of devout Christian missionaries; and it is a point of honor to-day, among these scholars, to find in such books whatever can be anywhere discovered of wisdom, beauty, and moral force. Undoubtedly there is much; for the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world was not left without witness in the often high and sensitive spirits from which they came. A Roman Catholic Bishop has affirmed that Buddhism teaches in its scriptures "a surprising number of the finest precepts and purest moral truths," though the peculiar religion of those books culminates, he affirms, in atheism and nihilism. But laying aside all special comparisons, what have these religions done, either or all, for the general, liberal, and progressive education of the ardent, ingenious, and capable peoples, among whom they had ancient place, and have had since continued power? What strong, steady, effective impulse has gone from them into the recipient public mind? What sciences, arts, poetries, have sprung from them, which the world at large will not surrender? Of what beneficent and fruitful civilizations have they been the unwasting source? R. S. S.

The Bible alone makes disciples of every race. It would be hard to decide where it had more strongly displayed its subduing power,—on the Asiatic, the African, or the European mind. Descending with the ages, and through every phase of humanity, it has met them all, it has warred with all, and its uniform triumph warrants the induction, even aside from faith, that it will surely survive them all. Of such a history it is but sober eulogy if we employ the language of that strange believer, Sir Thomas Browne,—"Men's works have an age like themselves, and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and a period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the final flames when all things shall confess their ashes." T. L.

The Bible alone, of all books in the world, instead of uttering the opinions of the successive ages that produced it, has been the antagonist of these opinions, and victor over them all. It maintained the unity of God amid all the darkness of Western polytheism; the vivid personality of God against Eastern pantheism; the ineffable purity and holiness of God against the obscurities of Egyptian and Canaanitish idolatry; the omnipresence of God against the heathen theories of gods many and lords many; teaching salvation by grace without works just when and where the great schools of the world's philosophy were glorifying in their schemes of human regeneration; teaching the resurrection of the body, and that this mortal must put on immortality, just when and where Socrates and Plato, on the one hand, had theorized for man an immortality that excluded the mortal body, and Epicurus and his swinish herd, on the other, were teaching their practical atheism of the destruction of both soul and body together. In all these things the Bible was in advance of the ages in which it was written, and the antagonist of the false teachings of those ages, and in the end the victor over them all. S. R.

*The habit of sacrifice* had been ground in upon the race not only for a lifetime, but for a world-time. Everybody everywhere spontaneously fled to this rite as the fit expression of the sense of sin and the hope of deliverance. And yet, in little more than fifty years after the introduction of Christianity into his province, Pliny

complains that it had almost put a stop to sacrifices there. A world-habit, dominant from the beginning, thus rolled back upon itself in a single generation! We cannot possibly appreciate the greatness of this conquest. Sacrifices had been almost the whole life of the people: from childhood sacrifices had met each man in every form, in every quarter, in every act, in every duty of every day's business. Not only could he not engage in any of the graver duties of the citizen without being confronted with them everywhere; he could not rise from his bed in the morning, retire to it at night, partake of his necessary sustenance, without a recognition of a god or the performance of a rite at every step. And yet Christianity came, not undermining the principle which underlay sacrifices, but emphasizing it, and still they fled away from its presence. *Warfield.*

We should win wondrous confidence in these stanch, sturdy Scriptures of God, if we could for a moment see this one volume standing up in all the serenity of its celestial powers, begirt by all the thousands upon thousands of panoplied books that have been sent out to beat it down. The strength of a champion is measured by the strength of the men that are needed to overmaster him. And yet there was never a time when the Bible stood more evidently sovereign of the field and sovereign of human hearts than to-day. The Bible has taken no detriment. The rents its enemies have made are hardly such as to reward the pains of their valor. As has been elegantly said: "They are like scratches on the stones of the Milan Cathedral; like the breaking of a single pane of its pictured glass. The great structure stands unimpaired, shining imperial in the serene Italian air."—It was a motto of Napoleon's, "To replace is to conquer." The antagonists of the Bible will have to give us something in place of the Bible before they can break the power of the Bible. Let these destructionists show themselves constructionists as well. Out of the ruins of the old let them build us a comfortable little chapel of the new. It is but just; it is but honest; it is but the rendering of an equivalent. Removing old support, let them give us something in its place that heart and mind can lean upon; something that will go forward beautifying the home, purifying society, cultivating kindly relations among nations, holding men in proper relations with men, developing character, repressing the baser passions, stimulating the finer ones, creating in men peace and joy, robbing the death-chamber of its gloom and the grave of its shadow, and suffusing life with that beauteous serenity with which the Word of God has been for three thousand years so triumphantly demonstrating *its* power to do C. H. P.

*Tests of Undesignedness.* It is surely a striking fact, and one that could scarcely happen in any continuous fable, however cunningly devised, that annals written by so many hands, embracing so many generations of men, relating to so many different states of society, abounding in supernatural incidents throughout, when brought to the same touchstone of truth, undesignedness, should still not flinch from it; and surely the character of a history, like the character of an individual, when attested by vouchers, not of one family, or of one place, or of one date only, but by such as speak to it under various relations, in different situations, and at divers periods of time, can scarcely deceive us. *Blunt.*

*The Land testifies to the Book.* I can bear testimony to the minute truth of innumerable incidental allusions in Holy Writ to the facts of nature, of climate, of geographical position,—corroborations which reach to minute details that prove the writers to have lived when and where they are asserted to have lived; and which attest their scrupulous accuracy in recording what they saw and observed around them. I can find no discrepancies between their geographical or physical statements and the evidence of present facts. I can find no standpoint here for the keenest advocates against the full inspiration of the scriptural record. The Holy Land not only elucidates but bears witness to the truth of the Holy Book. *Tristram.*——In the cities, and still more in the villages, of Palestine the mode of life is now just what it was centuries upon centuries ago, The houses, the food, the implements and utensils, even the dresses, are the same; the same old stories and traditions linger among the people, and their common parlance is still that of the Bible. In a word, the people of the Holy Land are a living memorial of the accuracy and reality of the Bible; a standing and incontrovertible proof that the Word of God is no vague, unreal rhapsody, but an intensely true, vivid, and life-like reality. *E. H. Palmer.*

*Unchanged and inexhaustible.* Each great movement for good in the Christian church has coincided with fresh study of the Bible. It was so with the great fathers of the first ages, with Origen, and the masters of Alexandria; it was so with Jerome and Augustine; it was so in the tenth, the fourteenth, and the sixteenth centuries. At each crisis deeper investigation of Scripture found new treasures which answered

to the wants of a new society. And by God's help it will be so now. The power of the Bible is unchanged and inexhaustible. It speaks with authority to societies and to men ; it speaks with sympathy ; because it speaks with a human voice, through men to men, in many fashions and in many parts. We commonly describe the Bible as a "Book." It is a book, one book ; but it is more. The first title which was given to it in the West was *Bibliotheca Divina*, and it is indeed a Divine Library, rich in every region of human interest, rich in every variety of human record. And this fulness, this catholicity of the Bible, is what we need to feel now. The fulness, the catholicity of the Bible answer to the fulness, the catholicity of the faith. Both were recognized together. And if once we can see in the Bible the breadth, the patience, the long-suffering of the dealings of God in the past, we shall gain that courageous hope in the prospect of the whole world, with all its mysteries and sorrows, which we commonly seek by confining our attention to a little portion of its vast range. We may have something to unlearn, and much to learn in our interpretation of the Bible. But it stands before us a living monument of a divine life. Its last message is not spoken. It is not, as some would treat it, simply a priceless literary treasure. It is still the organ of the divine Spirit, eloquent for us with fresh vital truth. *Westcott.*

We do not claim new revelations from the Spirit, for we do not need them ; the revelations from God to man recorded in the word are all-sufficient. So far as this dispensation is concerned they are final and complete. We do not claim inspiration from the Spirit, for we do not need it. God has in the past inspired a sufficient number of men to give us correctly his completed revelations. Were he to speak in an audible voice from heaven, he would make no change in them. While we do not claim new revelations, nor inspiration, this we do claim : We may, through the Spirit, have the illumination of the perfect and inspired revelation. This we can have, and this we ought to have. *Gregg.*——Why does not God write an addendum to the Bible ? What addendum could he write ? He has spoken upon every great subject, and he has told us everything needful to their understanding and out-living. You cannot mention one great theme on which there is not more written than we have yet studied or carried out. J. P.

The Church in all ages, an uncounted multitude—the Greek and the barbarian, the light-haired Saxon and "the swarthy Ethiope," men and women of every nation and every grade of culture,—have received into their hearts the same Gospel and, through its power, have become new creatures. The Gospel that the minister now has to preach is nothing new, nothing that requires some further test of its verity or wholesome tendency. Nor is it something that the world in its onward march will outgrow and fling aside. It will remain like the vast ocean that rolls from shore to shore and spreads fertility and health over wide continents ; like the sun that has poured its light and heat upon the earth, like the stars that have travelled on their majestic pathway since the morning of creation. Yea, longer than mountain or sea, than sun or constellation, will the Gospel of redemption endure : for "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." More and more does the bewildered mind of man turn to him who is the light of the world, the interpreter of God to man, and of man to himself. Through all the confusion of opinion and mist of scepticism, there is felt the power of him who was lifted up that he might draw all men unto himself. The gates of the East are thrown open. Ancient and populous nations send forth messengers, like the Magi of old, to inquire for Jesus. The isles wait for his law. *G. P. Fisher.*

## Section 5.

### THE BIBLE :

#### REVELATION (THEOLOGY, RELIGION) AND SCIENCE.

Science cannot interfere with theology, because it cannot enter its sphere, and thus can neither bear testimony nor offer criticism. Science cannot transcend its own boundaries. Unchallengeable within these, it is powerless beyond. It cannot, on any warrant capable of bearing scientific test, maintain that there are no facts save those recognized by external observation, or that there is no form of truth save that which explains the phenomena presented to the senses. Science has no testimony to bear except as to the fact of observation, and

can neither affirm nor deny beyond the boundaries which it has marked out for itself and proclaimed, and which all intelligent men see must be the boundaries of science according to its nature. As it is no disparagement of theology to say that it cannot do the work of science, so neither is it any disparagement of science to say that it cannot contribute toward a rational test of theology otherwise than by presenting its testimony as to the facts of nature. There can be no scientific denial of the supernatural, for science is only of the observational—that is, of the natural. The primary and fundamental fact is that science and theology occupy distinct spheres, so that the one cannot enter the province of the other. *Calderwood.*

The border-land between science and religion is one which men cannot be prevented from entering; but what they may find there depends very much on themselves. Under wise guidance it may prove to us an Eden, the very gate of heaven, and we may acquire in it larger and more harmonious views of both the seen and the unseen, of science and religion. But, on the other hand, it may be found to be a battle-field or a bedlam, a place of confused cries and incoherent ravings, and strewn with the wrecks of human hopes and aspirations. *Dawson.*

"At the meeting of the British Association in 1865, some six hundred and seventeen scientific men signed a paper containing the following declaration—viz.: 'We conceive that it is impossible for the Word of God, as written in the book of nature, and God's word, written in Holy Scripture, to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ. We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular.'" There is and there can be no conflict between science and revelation; but there is and there has long been conflict between scientists and divines; and a fruitful source of this conflict is, as intimated in the paper of the British scientists, quoted above, the present incompleteness of science. Taking science as it is set forth in the popular writings of the day, we will find it consisting of two distinct and separable portions—viz.: (1) a body of well-ascertained facts and principles, which make up the science itself; and (2) a body of hypotheses and conjectures, more or less probable, by means of which men are endeavoring to enlarge the domain of science. It would be a great mistake to reject the use of all hypotheses simply because they were unproven. The history of science furnishes abundant evidence that hypotheses, even such as have afterward turned out to be incorrect, have been of great use in directing the course of investigation and experiment on the part of those who were laboring for the enlargement of human knowledge. *Armstrong.*

To reverence the majesty of fact is one thing; to render to mere tentative and ambitious hypothesis that honor which is due only to fact is quite another. Theology can but welcome the facts of Science: she may reasonably be jealous of the occasional encroachments of scientific hypothesis. And by this jealousy she does good service to the real interests of science itself; since the temper which indulges in the luxury of frequent and premature hypothesis, is the very opposite of that industrious because humble perseverance which enriches science with a larger and larger command of fact. H. P. L.

Only one seeing the end from the beginning could so adjust the language used as on the one hand to make it tell the men of the existing generation no more than they otherwise know of astronomical or geological or any other natural truth, and yet on the other to make it such that the men of all future generations should be able, in the long run, and without violence, to explain it satisfactorily in the light of their clearer and fuller information and their more advanced and accurate science. *Candlish.*——It was never Christ's intention to reveal scientific truth in his Word; but he has left ample verge and scope for it. The indentations of the two revolving wheels will be found to fit, whenever they really come into contact; and the only thing broken will be the premature human harmonizings which are thrust in between them. *Ker.*

As the facts of natural science have not been all ascertained and classified, as its laws have not been all recognized, and as the inferences of to-day may be modified by the discoveries of to-morrow, it is absurd to be demanding immediate evidence of a perfect agreement between Scripture and science. Apparent contradictions are, at the present stage, unavoidable. There must first be an exact and exhaustive examination of all those points at which the Scriptures and the sciences touch each other; for so long as a single fact or a single law remains unknown, some important or essential truth, intimately related to the Bible, may be concealed. It becomes us to wait patiently, while we work

persistently, for the solution of difficulties which may be continuing to press upon us. The experience of the past is an encouragement for the future. The sciences have again and again become their own interpreter, and rejected erroneous inferences. Holding fast the Bible with the one hand, we may grasp all that science brings to us with the other, and retain it until we find for it an appropriate place. If there is one lesson more than another which the progress of the sciences is teaching us, it is that of caution and the necessity of repressing dogmatic tendencies ; and if there is one benefit more than another which the history of this discussion is conferring, it is that of greater confidence in the truth of the Bible.

It is unworthy of any Christian scientist to be discouraged by apparently insurmountable obstacles. The boldest assertions and the most plausible reasonings need not disturb the Bible student. Difficulties seemingly insuperable have, in the past, suddenly yielded to unexpected discoveries ; and every science, we may rest assured, will hereafter gain strength enough and light enough to purify its own temple and be its own interpreter. The past may be held to be prophetic of future solutions ; and the sciences will be found not only correcting the mistakes and the arrogance of many of their students, but rebuking the too hasty concessions of Christian apologists, and either directly or indirectly revealing, at the same time, the impressiveness and the majesty of Scripture truth. *W. Fraser.*

It was not God's purpose to give instruction to men in geology, astronomy, geography, or chronology. It is on their relations with their Creator, upon duties of men toward him and toward each other, upon the rule of faith and of conduct in life, that God has lighted them by light from heaven. As the limits of the finite world are those of human science, so to human study and human science God has surrendered the finite world. He has dictated to Moses the laws which regulate the duties of man toward God, and of man toward man ; but he has left to Newton the discovery of the laws which preside over the universe. The Scriptures speak upon all subjects ; circumstances connected with the finite world are there incessantly mixed with perspectives of infinity ; but it is only to the latter, to that future of which they permit us to snatch a view, and to the laws which they impose upon men, that the divine inspiration addresses itself ; God only pours his light in quarters which man's eye and man's labor cannot reach ; for all that remains, the sacred books speak the language used and understood by the generations to whom they are addressed. "Many things," says Jerome, "are recounted in the Scriptures according to the judgment of the times when they happened, and not according to the truth." "The purpose of the Holy Scriptures," says the Cardinal Baronius, "is to teach us how to go to heaven, and not how the heavens go." God does not, even when he inspires them, transport into future domains of science the interpreters he uses, or the nations to whom he sends them ; he takes them both as he finds them, with their traditions, their notions, their degree of knowledge or ignorance as respects the finite world, of its phenomena and its laws. It is not the scientific progress of the human understanding ; it is the moral progress of the human soul which is the object of the divine action, and for the exercise of his power on the human soul God requires not science either as a precursor or a companion ; he addresses himself to instincts and desires the most intimate and most sublime as well as the most universal in man's nature, to instincts and desires of which science is neither the object nor the measure, and which require to be satisfied from other sources. Whatever true or false science we find in the Scriptures upon the subject of the finite world, proceeds from the writers themselves or their contemporaries ; they have spoken as they believed, or as those believed who surrounded them when they spoke : on the other hand, the light thrown over the infinite, the law laid down, and the perspective opened by that same light, these are what proceed from God, and which he has inspired in the Scriptures. Their object is essentially and exclusively moral and practical ; they express the ideas, employ the images, and speak the language best calculated to produce a powerful effect upon the soul, to regenerate and to save it. This, then, is their sole object—the relations of God with man, and the solution of those problems which these relations cause to weigh upon the human soul. The deeper we go in the study of the sacred volumes, restored to their real object, the more the divine inspiration becomes manifest and striking. God and man are there ever both present, both actors in the same history. *Guizot.*

Science has a foundation ; and so has religion. Let them unite their foundations, and the basis will be broader, and they will be two compartments of one great fabric reared to the glory of God. Let the one be the outer and the other the inner court. In the one let all look, and admire, and adore ; and in the other let those

who have faith kneel, and pray, and praise. Let the one be the sanctuary where human learning may present its richest incense as an offering to God; and the other, "the holiest of all," separated from it by a veil now rent in twain, and in which, on a blood sprinkled mercy-seat, we pour out the love of a reconciled heart, and hear the oracles of the living God! *M'Cosh.*

Science is no Gospel. It teaches not one of those elements that are finest in manhood, or that make manhood worth our while. It is as has been so excellently written, "Whatever the advances of modern science, there will still be the poison of sin which no earthly antidote can neutralize; there will still be the sorrow of bereavement, to be solaced only by the vision of the angel at the door of the sepulchre; there will still be the sense of loneliness stealing over the heart, even amid the bustle of the world, to be dispelled only by the consciousness of the Saviour's presence; there will still be the spirit shudder at the thought of death, which only faith in Christ can change into the desire to depart and to be with him, which is far better. For these things science has no remedy and philosophy no solace; and, strong in its adaptations to these irrepressible necessities of the human heart, the Gospel of Christ will outlive all philosophical attack and survive every form of scientific belief." C. H. P.

Should science increase its present knowledge tenfold, there is nothing it can discover which will enable it to close up that region in man where the spirit communes in prayer and praise with its Father, where the longing for rest is content in the peace of forgiveness, where the desire of being perfect in unselfishness is satisfied by union with the activity of the unselfish God, where sorrow feels its burden lightened by divine sympathy, where strength is given to overcome evil—where, as decay and death grow upon the outward frame, the inner spirit begins to put forth its wings and to realize more nearly the eternal summer of his presence, in whom there is fulness of life in fulness of love. S. A. B.

This grand old Book of God still stands, and will continue to stand, though science and philosophy are ever changing their countenances and passing away. It is one of the few things in our world that never becomes obsolete. It speaks the language of all ages, and is adapted to all climes. Ever clear and ever young, it has the same power for the later as for the early mind; it is as much the religious vernacular of the occidental as of the oriental races. Instead of being its defect, it is its great, its divine wisdom that it commits itself to no scientific system or scientific language, while yet it brings before the mind those primal facts which no science can ever reach, and for this purpose uses those first vivid conceptions which no changes in science and no obsoleteness in language can ever wholly impair. T. L.

[Read Section 397, New Test., Vol. II.]

## Section 6.

### THE BIBLE:

#### ITS INTERPRETATION AND PRESERVATION; MANUSCRIPTS AND VERSIONS.

*Its Interpretation.* The Bible is written *by men.* Hence it is subject to the ordinary rules of interpretation which apply to all human writings; not to rules arbitrary in their nature, modern in their invention, or unexampled in the days of the writer. Still further, the Bible is written *for men,* and accordingly, in the language of common life, not in the special terminology of science or art. M.——The *whole* Bible is a revelation from God; a revelation made in human language, and intelligible to us, if it is at all intelligible, *only by being interpreted according to the laws and principles of human language.* Any rule above this presupposes or assumes inspiration in the interpreter. The Bible is a book written by men, and for men—for all men, under the expectation that they can read and understand it. Otherwise it is no *revelation.* It follows, of course, that, if the laws of human language are to be applied to its interpretation, it stands, in this respect, on the same ground as all other books. It contains, of course, many things which other books do not. But this alters not the *nature of the language,* in which its disclosures are made. The language is used *more humano.* M. S.

Christ, not being like man who knows man's thoughts by his words, but knowing man's

thoughts immediately, never answered their words but their thoughts: much in the like manner is it with the Scriptures, which being written to the thoughts of men, and to the succession of all ages, with a foresight of all heresies, contradiction, differing estates of the Church, yea, and particularly of the elect, are not to be interpreted only according to the latitude of the proper sense of the place, and respectively toward that present occasion whereupon the words were uttered, or in precise congruity or contexture with the words before or after, or in contemplation of the principal scope of the place; but have in themselves not only totally or collectively, but distributively in clauses and words, infinite springs and streams of doctrine to water the church in every part. And, therefore, as the literal sense is, as it were, the main stream or river; so the moral sense chiefly, and sometimes the allegorical or typical, are they whereof the church hath most use. *Bacon.*

*To be studied as a Whole.* It is only by careful and balanced study of God's Revelation *as a whole*, gradually developed under the action of his Providence in human history until its final completion in the Incarnate Christ, and illustrated by the after history of the Church and the World, that a true, adequate and growing conception of its meaning can be attained; or a firm assurance of its impregnable position as *a light shining in a dark place*, in the deepening conflict of the Faith with unbelief, be secured; and the true principles of its full interpretation, especially as bearing on the future development of the Divine purposes in human history, be discovered. *Medd.*——It should never be forgotten, that as single clauses and specific statutes are always interpreted in the light of the whole body of law, and as all legislation is finally tested by its constitutionality, its agreement with the fundamental and organic national law, so should we read our Bibles. Judges assume that statutes cannot contradict each other; or, at least, that such contradiction is the result of blundering legislation, and made void thereby. The enactments constitute a living body of jurisprudence, finding its definite and controlling type in the constitution of the commonwealth or nation. The laws are both many and one. The latest supplement the earliest, because all alike are interpretative of the basic idea around which the national institutions have crystallized. Thus is the multiplicity of enactment guarded and modified by the unity of the law. The Holy Scriptures may be regarded as the Statute-Book of the kingdom of God. They are many and one. Separate statements and instructions should be read in the light of the whole law. Our Bibles are not a collection of pamphlets, chapters, and verses, to be used indiscriminately and independently. They represent the slow unfolding and glorious realization of one great thought of God,—the redemption of lost men through the mediation of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit,—and the light of that thought should illumine every page for us. The Word of God is one, and only in that living unity can we hear its final judgment on any question of doctrine or duty. *Behrends.*

*Reason responsive to Revelation.* Reason in man is receptive of reason in God: man can understand what God has to say to him. But we come to a deeper and richer thought when we consider that reason in man is *responsive* to reason in God; not only can man understand what God has to say, but what God says to him touches him in the depths of his being and commands the heartiest response. And the response is always heartiest when the converse with God is most direct. Hence we are wont to say that what men need is not proof that God has spoken, but to hear God speak; not the evidences of Christianity, but the message of Jesus Christ. Both in nature and in the Bible there is a remarkable absence of the apologetic tone. *Behrends.*

*Respecting Objections and Difficulties.* A saying of Bishop Butler is well worthy of being borne in mind, as teaching us to beware of hastily assuming that objections to Revelation, whether suggested by the progress of science, or by the supposed incongruity of its own contents, are unanswerable. We are not, he says, rashly to suppose that we have arrived at the true meaning of the *whole* of that book. "It is not at all incredible that a book, which has been so long in the possession of mankind, should contain many truths as yet undiscerned. For all the same phenomena and the same faculties of investigation, from which such great discoveries in natural knowledge have been made in the present and last age, were equally in the possession of mankind several thousand years before." *Rogers.*

There are difficulties in the Bible, as there are in connection with all God's works. There are difficulties in nature, raising doubts in some minds whether it is really the product of an infinitely benevolent Creator. There are great difficulties in providence—in the moral government of God. An analogy runs through all God's works; and that analogy would fail us if

we meet with difficulties in nature, tremendous difficulties in providence, and no difficulties in the Word. W. G. B.——If the book, which professed to come from a wise and holy God, displayed no difficulties to ignorant men, we should almost doubt its claims to inspiration. If the Bible only embodied human ideas, while avowedly containing the dictates of the Holy Spirit, we should question it. If it only manifested human ideas of love and kindness, while setting forth claims to be the glorious gospel of the blessed God, we should suspect it. If it only reached the level of human ideas of justice, goodness, and the claims of truth, we should doubt it. If its ideas were within the scope of human ordinary thought, and not beyond the range of common men, we should not believe it. If it was merely suited to one order or class of men, and did not speak with a voice intelligible to humanity, we should challenge its pretensions. *An.*——The outlying field of mystery —connected both with the clearly revealed facts of nature and of the Bible—must be allowed neither to discredit the facts we have nor to lead us into the fields of vague and useless speculation. A thousand questions can be asked concerning any plain matter of fact where one can be answered. In this respect nature and the Bible are alike; but nature is far more abundant in things to which we ascribe no definite design than the Bible is in facts in which we fail to see definite marks of inspiration. In submitting to the guidance of the Bible we are doing what the scientific man does, who subordinates his theories to the facts of nature. Those facts may be difficult of interpretation but they are realities, and yield the truth so far as he understands them; while their hidden meaning is ever beckoning him on to further investigation into the real nature of things. The difference between the interpreter who acknowledges the Bible as supreme authority and the one who exalts his own ethico-religious consciousness to that place of authority is about the same as that between the sea-captain who takes his bearings from the stars and the one who guides his course by the light upon his own masthead. G. F. W.

*Errors in Transcription.* God, in his constitution of the Bible, has made it impossible to seriously pervert it. Of course there will be erroneous transcriptions. The hand of the scribe is not inspired. Of course there may be here and there insertions of a marginal note written into the text. Of course there may be a word dropped out, or a vowel omitted, in one passage or another. The eye of the scribe will sometimes fail to discern distinctly what it sees or what it omits; and there must be of necessity more or less liability to minute error in making copies of so many writings. But the great course of doctrine cannot be eliminated from the Scripture, except as you tear the whole fabric into tatters. It is interwoven, every part with every other—story, law, precept, proverb, the biographies of Christ by the evangelists, and the argument of Christ by the apostles, and the vision of Christ in the Apocalypse; until, if you throw away one part, you must equally throw away many others. You may get rid of the story of Balaam; though, if you do, you will miss one of the most picturesque and impressive stories in all the Old Testament. But what then will you do with the references to him, in Micah, in Peter, and in the Revelation? You may get rid of the miracle in the passage of the Red Sea, and suppose a mere shift of the wind when Pharaoh's army was divinely destroyed. But what then are you to do with the song of Moses and of Miriam? and what with the 76th psalm, and the 106th, and the 114th? and what with the "song of Moses and the Lamb" in the crowning book of the Apocalypse? They are interbraided, like threads that have been woven so closely together that you cannot tear them apart except by destroying the entire fabric. You cannot extract one and leave the rest, with any ingenuity or by any force. R. S. S.

Vast as has been the extension of the science of textual criticism since the days of Bentley, we need not alter a word of the celebrated remark which he made one hundred and fifty years ago: "The real text of the sacred writers does not now (since the originals have been so long lost) lie in any manuscript or edition, but is dispersed in them all. It is competently exact, indeed, in the worst manuscript now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them. Choose as awkwardly as you will, choose the worst by design, out of the whole lump of readings, make your 30,000 (variations) as many more, if numbers of copies can ever reach that sum: all the better to a knowing and a serious reader, who is thereby more richly furnished to select what he sees genuine. But even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet, with the most sinistrous and absurd choice, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter, nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same." *Farrar.*

### *Preservation of the Bible.*

The marks of divine care in the production

and preservation of the Bible which we can see and test are the divine seal upon the whole. They are the superscription of God, certifying that the metal upon which they are impressed is pure gold. We might not be able to test the metal for ourselves, but we can read the superscription. G. F. W.——The languages of the Bible were prepared by Divine Providence as the most suitable ones for declaring the divine revelation to mankind. Belonging to the two great families of speech, the Shemitic and the Indo-Germanic, which have been the bearers of civilization, culture, and the noblest products of human thought and emotion, they are themselves the highest and most perfect developments of those families, presenting their contrasted features but combining in a higher unity on the principles of Pentecost, in order to give us the complete divine revelation. Having accomplished this their highest purpose, they soon afterward became *stereotyped* in form, "dead" languages, so that all successive generations and all the families of earth might find the common, divine revelation in the *same fixed and unalterable forms*. *Briggs*.

The Bible has stood the test of time. The languages in which it was first written died long ago, but they left the book immortal. It has become unchangeable, imperishable, the Living Word, surviving, ever in the life of the church. It has been engraved in the souls of the pious, and in the memorials they have left through the long line of ages. It has been printed in history, stereotyped, we may say, in the very heart of cultivated humanity. No other book was ever so preserved. Early versions and recensions have rendered forgeries impossible. If all modern copies were lost, it could be gathered again from quotations scattered through many thousand volumes, ancient and modern. Rival sects have jealously guarded its textual purity. The Jews have ever stood sentinel over the Hebrew Scriptures. Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Æthiopic, Gothic, Sclavonic, Persian, Arabic translations, together with manuscripts stored in the literature of every Christianized nation, have made an impregnable wall around the Greek Testament. Even the verbal variances, where they are not merely matters of orthography, have poured light upon the arguments of the spiritual idea. No book has been so studied, annotated, paragraphed,—so divided into sections, chapters, and verses well known and universally received,—so furnished with early Targums, with Masoretic countings of words and letters, with notices of every irregular grammatical form, and every anomalous spelling. No volume has been so walled and hedged about with Indices, Concordances, Grammars, Lexicons; no one has given rise to so rich and copious a literature as this Book of Books, so ancient yet still so young, so Oriental yet so adapted to all peoples, to all climes, to all ages, to all circumstances and conditions, outward or spiritual, of the human race. *T. Lewis*.

Marvellous is the very existence of this Book. One portion of it was preserved by the Jews, who have been the most careful and scrupulous custodians of a historical record which faithfully and severely delineates their guilt and obstinacy—who have been the guardians of predictions which fully and clearly describe the person and work of a Messiah whom they reject; while the other portion of the Bible has been transcribed and transmitted by a church, the errors of whose apostasy are anticipated and condemned in the very pages which they have so diligently preserved. Strange indeed, the synagogue guarding the Old, the church of Rome guarding the New Testament. *An.*—— But the Latin Church has interfered with that Canon which the Jews so diligently guarded. The Latin version, called the Vulgate, contained the Apocrypha. The Council of Trent, in 1546, pronounced all the contents of the Vulgate equally canonical and authoritative; and thus were eleven books or parts of books, which the Jews of Palestine excluded from their Canon, put by arbitrary decree of a modern council on a level with Moses and the Prophets. The Reformed Churches with one accord repudiated the canonicity of the Apocrypha, although it was long the custom in England, and still is in Germany, to bind up those books in the same volume with Holy Scripture. D. F.

*Manuscripts*. Manuscripts, that is, documents written by hand, not printed with type, are of two sorts: the *uncial* and the *cursive*. "Uncial manuscripts," or "uncials," are those written in large, disconnected letters. All the more ancient Greek manuscripts are written in uncials. But about the tenth century of our era, the scribes began to run the uncial letters together, like our modern writing with a pen, or script. Thus was formed a running hand; and "cursive" means running, in this sense. A cursive manuscript is one written cursively that is, in a running hand; or in letters joined together by strokes, or cursive letters. As the cursives are almost invariably later than the uncials, there is a presumption, but not an absolute certainty, that a cursive is less accurate than the uncials.

The "Five Great Uncials," as they are called, are the most important and ancient manuscripts of the Greek Testament, or parts thereof. Of these, the first, and perhaps the oldest, is the Sinaitic Manuscript, whose romantic story is familiar to all. It was discovered at the Monastery of St. Catharine, on Mt. Sinai, in 1844 and 1859. The first portion, containing parts of the Old Testament in Greek, is in the Library of the University at Leipsic ; the latter, containing the whole of the New Testament, with other matter, is in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. It was written at some time in the fourth century of our era. This is known as *Codex Aleph ;* as it is designated in critical works by the Hebrew letter *Aleph.* Second is *Codex B*, the famous Vatican Manuscript, containing a large portion of both Old and New Testaments in Greek, in the Vatican Library at Rome. Its date is not far from that of the Sinaitic, though many critics think it older. As this manuscript does not contain the Revelation, the designation of *Codex B* for that book means an uncial manuscript of probably the eighth century, also in the Vatican Library. Third is the Alexandrian Manuscript, the whole Greek Bible (with some slight gaps), of the fifth century, now in the British Museum. This is known as *Codex A.* It was presented to King Charles I. by Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople. Its present name is owing to the fact that it has been supposed to have been written at Alexandria, in Egypt. Fourth is the *Codex Ephremi Rescriptus*, or a *palimpsest,* whose older writing consists of portions from nearly the whole New Testament. The later writing is a Greek translation of some of the works of the Syrian Church father Ephrem. The age of its older writing is not far from that of the Alexandrine Manuscript. It is known as *Codex C.* To Tischendorf is due the honor of its decipherment. Fifth is the *Codex Bezæ*, or Beza's Codex (D), now in the University Library at Cambridge, England. It was presented to the University by the famous Theodore Beza, in 1581. This was probably written in the sixth century. It contains the Gospels and Acts. These five great uncials are our most precious witnesses to the original text of the New Testament ; but far from being the only ones. They are not the *only* uncials ; and there is a multitude of cursives besides. These five have been published, and copies of them multiplied, some in fac-simile, and some more than once, so that the exact contents of all would be accurately known and preserved, even though one or all of them should be destroyed. S. S. T.

A new demand for the original Scriptures sprung up at the Reformation. The text was uncritically and rapidly made from a few manuscripts, none of them very old. The first text made was by Cardinal Ximenes, in 1514, known as the Complutensian Polyglot. Then came the texts of Erasmus and Stephanas and Beza, followed by the Elzevir, so beautifully printed and extensively circulated that it became the *textus receptus*, the commonly received text used by King James' translators, and all the Bibles of modern times are founded upon it. Since then many more manuscripts have been found and made accessible to scholars, some of them of great age and value, as the Codex Alexandrinus, of the fifth century, in the British Museum in London ; the Codex Vaticanus (fifth century), in the Vatican Library at Rome ; the Codex Sinaiticus, about 331 A D., in the library at St. Petersburg. The last is the most valuable manuscript in the world. It is supposed to be one of the fifty copies of the New Testament made by the order of the Emperor Constantine. Now, by a careful comparison of the text of all the different manuscripts and versions, the true text is obtained. There has been a great advance from the critical text of Griesbach, in 1812, on through Lachmann and Tischendorf to the latest and best of Westcott and Hort, which was the basis of the recent revision of the New Testament. Is not this repeated revision of the text unsettling? Not at all. On the contrary, it shows conclusively that in our present New Testament we have a text infinitely better and more certain than of any other book in all the world. The differences are so slight that they do not involve one single doctrine ; not one single institution ; nor do they touch the foundation of our Christian faith and hope. They but bring us so much nearer to the tone and inflection of the voice of Christ. *A. A. Hodge.*

### *Notable Versions.*

The Septuagint is the title applied to the most ancient and valuable of the Greek versions. It is so called, either from the Jewish account of *seventy-two* persons having been employed to make it, or from its having been ordered, superintended, or sanctioned by the Sanhedrin, or great council of the Jews, which consisted of seventy, or, more correctly, of seventy-two persons. Much uncertainty rests upon the *real* history of this version, though its date is usually referred to the second century before the Christian era ; but there is no question as to its value ; and in so much esteem was it held by the Jews and the early Christians,

that it was constantly read in the synagogues and churches. Hence it is uniformly cited by the early fathers, whether Greek or Latin, and from it all the translations into other languages (with the exception of the Syriac), which were approved by the ancient Christian church, were executed, as the Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Gothic, and old Italic or Latin version in use before Jerome ; and to this day the Septuagint is exclusively read in the Greek and most other Oriental churches. As a source of interpretation it is invaluable. Desirous of possessing in Greek a faithful representation of the Hebrew Scriptures, and being themselves Jews, the translators retained Hebrew *forms* and *modes* of expression, while the *words* employed were Greek. The language therefore of the Septuagint is a kind of *Hebrew*-Greek, which gives character to the style of the New Testament, and forms one of the most important means of its critical illustration. "The book," says Michaelis, " most necessary to be read and understood by every man who studies the New Testament, is, without doubt, the Septuagint."

*The Vulgate* is the appellation given to the common Latin translation of the sacred Scriptures. After Christianity extended itself in the West, a Latin version of the Bible naturally became necessary. In the time of Augustine there were several of these ; although only one of them was adopted by ecclesiastical authority. This was called *Vulgata, common, popular,* because it was made from the Greek version, also denominated koine, *common.* This translation was made literally from the Septuagint, and gives all the verbal mistakes of the Greek. There are still extant of it the Psalms, Job, and some of the apocryphal books complete, besides fragments. As the manuscripts of this version had become by degrees very much corrupted, a revision of the Psalter and Book of Job was undertaken in A.D. 383, by Jerome, in pursuance of an appointment to the work by Damasus, bishop of Rome. This is still extant, and called *Psalterium Romanum.* While Jerome was thus employed in the revision of the ancient *Vulgata,* or *Itala,* he ventured to commence also a new version of his own, out of the original Hebrew. He began with the Books of Kings, and completed the work, A D. 405, with Jeremiah. *Bush.*

*English Translations.*

*John Wickliffe,* about 1380, either translated the whole Bible from the Latin Vulgate, or collected previous translations which completed an *English Bible.* His version of the New Testament has been often published.

*William Tyndale,* in 1526, printed his English version of the New Testament. Two years after, he also printed a translation of the Pentateuch. He was martyred at Antwerp in 1536.

*Miles Coverdale,* in 1535, printed at Zurich the *first complete English translation of the Bible,* composed of Tyndale's versions, as far as they went, and his own.

*John Rogers,* in 1537, having previously assisted Tyndale, now edited a Bible (probably at Hamburg) under the assumed name of Thomas Matthews ; his Bible is therefore generally called *Matthews's Bible.* This translation was revised by *Cranmer* and *Coverdale,* and printed in London, 1539, in large folio, and from this was called the *Great Bible.*

*The Geneva Bible* was published between 1557 and 1560, at Geneva, being a new version by Coverdale, Knox, Goodman, and others, with short annotations. The New Testament in this Bible was the first one divided into verses.

*The Bishops' Bible* was published in 1568, with two prefaces by Archbishop Parker, who employed several critics to make the translation, among whom were eight bishops ; hence it was called the *Bishops' Bible.* This Bible was read in churches, but the *Geneva* was preferred in families.

THE PRESENT AUTHORIZED ENGLISH VERSION was published in 1611. At the Hampton Court Conference, in 1603, several objections were made to the *Bishops' Bible,* and, in 1604, James I. issued a commission to fifty-four of the most eminent divines of both universities to undertake a new version. This was not commenced until 1607, when seven of the divines had died and only forty-seven were living. The forty-seven survivors were now divided into six committees—two at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster—and each had a certain portion assigned it. In 1610 the great work was completed, and then revised by a committee of six of the translators, and finally reviewed by Bishop Bilson and Dr. Smith ; the latter prefixed the Arguments and wrote the Preface. The whole was printed and published in 1611.

**Division into Chapters and Verses.** Of the invention of *chapters* the real author was Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro, who, having projected a concordance to the Latin Vulgate about the middle of the thirteenth century, divided both the Old and New Testaments into chapters, the same as we now have. The introduction of verses into the printed Hebrew Bible was made by an Amsterdam Jew in 1661, and into the Greek by Robert Stephens in 1551. *Wheeler.*

# Section 7.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT:

DIVISIONS; LANGUAGE AND TEXT; AUTHENTICITY; FACTS AND TEACHINGS; UNITY; DEVOTIONAL CHARACTER.

ACCORDING to the more ancient division in vogue at the time of Christ, the Old Testament was divided into three main portions:—(1.) The *Law;* (2.) The *Prophets;* (3.) The (other) *Holy Scriptures;*—of which portions the Five Books of Moses constituted the first, or the *Law.* Sometimes this name denoted the whole of the Old Testament scriptures. According to the above more exact division the *Law* comprehended the Five Books of Moses; and the *Prophets,* the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and all the prophetical books with the exception of Daniel. The rest of the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament—viz., the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles—were called Hagiographa; that is (other, or remaining), Sacred Scriptures. This is the order according to which the Hebrew Bible is arranged; whereas, in our English Bibles, the arrangement is into Historical, Doctrinal, and Prophetical Books. According to both divisions, however, the Five Books of Moses form the commencement and foundation of the Old Testament, and of the whole Sacred Scriptures. Upon them the whole history of the kingdom of God in that Testament reposes, in the same manner as upon the Old Testament reposes the history of the self-same kingdom in the New. They are taken for granted, and reference is made to them in all the books that follow, from the death of Moses to the times of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi, the last of the prophets, when prophecy ceases and the canonical books are closed. *Barth.*

The books of the Old Testament were divided by the Jews into three classes, entitled *The Law, The Prophets,* and *The Writings.* Of these the latter, called by our Lord "the psalms," were used chiefly in the Temple service, or for private edification. The other two formed the regular course of Sabbath reading in the synagogues, for which purpose the Pentateuch was divided into sections, each of which was followed by a passage from the Prophets selected as best explanatory of its meaning. Read together in this systematic way, we find the two constantly associated by our Lord, who usually calls them "the law and the prophets," but occasionally "Moses and the prophets." R. P. S.

The 39 Books of the Old Testament may be distributed in *three* classes: (1) 17 Historical Books, subdivided into 5 and 12. (2) 5 Poetical or Doctrinal Books. (3) 17 Prophetical, also subdivided into 5 and 12. This division may be readily memorized: 5, 12, 5, 5, 12; or, 17, 5, 17. B.

It is probable that the present Canon of the Old Testament was, in substance, the work of Ezra. Such a work involved much more than the collection into one volume of books already existing in a separate form; it included the selection from the whole number of those which bore and were to bear forever the stamp of divine authority: for no one imagines that the Scriptures of the Old Testament form a complete collection of the ancient Hebrew literature. That such a work, having such authority, had been completed before the Christian era, is clear from the allusions to the Holy Scriptures in the New Testament; and it was most probably accomplished during the Persian domination, which ended B.C. 323. There is every reason for its having been performed at as early a period as possible. Ezra's care to make the people well acquainted with the word of God is as conspicuous as his own knowledge of it. No man could be more qualified, as no time could be more fit, for a work which was most needful to establish the people in their faith. That the work must have been performed by an inspired man, is an axiom lying at the foundation of the whole question. On this ground, none but Ezra can be the author of the Canon; for no one has ever thought of ascribing the work to Nehemiah, the civil governor and man of action; and the only claim made for Malachi is the addition of his own prophecy to the Canon already framed by Ezra, and even this supposition is unnecessary, as Ezra may have been the survivor. P. S.

There are a few books of the Old Testament to which no distinct reference is made by the writers of the New, among which are Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. These we accept as a part of the Old Testament because of the evidence we have that at the beginning of our era they formed an integral portion of the Sacred Scriptures, and so received the indorsement of the general refer-

ences of Christ and his apostles to the Old Testament as a whole. G. F. W.

The passages in the Old Testament quoted or alluded to in the New Testament number about 850. Very few of these occur twice ; *i. e.* no author repeats his reference to the same passage, nor do two or more authors select the same ; so that the above number fairly represents the intimacy of the two authorships. *L. Whiting.*

### *The Hebrew Language.*

Moses is the father of the Hebrew language and literature. He moulded its fundamental types, and started it in those directions that it has ever since maintained. As Abraham had gone forth from the culture of Babylonia to enter upon the pilgrim life of believing communion with *El Shaddai*, so Moses went forth from the culture of Egypt to become the repre sentative of *Jahveh*, and organize a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a theocracy the vital principles of which became *reverential* fear and worship of the personal God of the covenant. The Hebrew language became, in its essential spirit and genius, a *religious* language, the holy tongue of the holy people of God, and Moses laid its foundations in a literature of sacred history, poetry, and prophecy. The history of the books of Moses is the fountain of all subsequent history. The grand hymn, Exod. 15 ; the prayer, Psa. 90 ; the prophetic didactic poem, Deut. 32 ; are the great boughs of lyric poetry upon which the Psalter subsequently burst forth in all its glory ; and his prophetic discourses in Deuteronomy are the sources, as they give the key to all subsequent prophecy.

The Hebrew language has a wonderful *majesty* and *sublimity*. This arises partly from its original religious genius, but chiefly from the sublime materials of its thought. God, the only true God, JAHVEH, the Holy Redeemer of his people, is the central theme of the Hebrew language and literature, a God not apart from nature and not involved in nature, no Pantheistic God, no mere Deistic God, but a God who enters into sympathetic relations with his creatures, who is recognized and praised, as well as ministered unto by the material creation. Hence there is a *realism* in the Hebrew language that can nowhere else be found to the same extent. The Hebrew people were as *realistic* as the Greek were *idealistic*. Their God is not a God thought out, reasoned out as an ultimate cause, or chief of a Pantheon, but a personal God, known by them in his association with them by a *proper name*, JAHVEH. Hence the so-called anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms of the Old Testament, so alien to the Indo-Germanic mind that an Occidental theology must explain them away, from an incapacity to enter into that bold and sublime realism of the Hebrews. Thus, again, man is presented to us in all his naked *reality*, in his weakness and sins, in his depravity and wretchedness, as well as in his bravery and beauty, his holiness and wisdom. In the Hebrew heroes we see men of like passions with ourselves, and feel that their experience is the key to the joys and sorrows of our life. So also in their conception of nature. Nature is to the Hebrew poet all aglow with the glory of God, and intimately associated with man in his origin, history, and destiny. There is no such thing as *science ;* that was for the Indo-Germanic mind ; but they give us that which science never gives, that which science is from its nature unable to present us : namely, those *concrete* relations, those expressive *features* of nature that declare to man their Master's mind and character, and claim human sympathy and protection as they yearn with man for the Messianic future. The Hebrew language manifests this realism on its very face. *Briggs.*

### *The Hebrew Text.*

The present Hebrew Text, as now found in the best editions of the Old Testament, is a reprint, with few and slight exceptions, of the text edited by Jewish scholars and published by Bomberg, at Venice, in 1525, and afterward, with corrections, in 1547. This Bible was accompanied by Rabbinic commentaries and was designed for the use of the Jews, since few Christians at that day were acquainted with classic Hebrew, and still fewer with Rabbinic. This text enjoys the great advantage of being acknowledged by Jews and Christians alike. That it is worthy of great confidence is the united testimony of critics, and especially of the latest and most learned of them, Professor H. L. Strack, of Berlin. For ascertaining the original form of the Hebrew text the main reliance of the critic and expositor is upon the Massorah, the technical name given to a collection of grammatico-critical notes on the Hebrew text with the design of determining its divisions, grammatical forms, letters, vowel-marks and accents. Such a work as this was rendered necessary by the fact that originally the Hebrew, like the other Semitic languages, was written with the consonants alone and without separation between the words. Hence it was a delicate and difficult task to determine what vowels should be employed in any particular case, and where the stops and accents should

be inserted. This, however, was accomplished, although the authors of the work and the time of their action are shrouded in obscurity. There can hardly be a doubt that the Massorah was the work not of one century but of many centuries. The old Rabbins were inclined to attribute it to Ezra and the Men of the Great Synagogue, but the more usual opinion assigns its commencement to the schools that were established at Tiberias and Babylon and elsewhere in the second century of our era. It existed only in the form of oral tradition until at some period between the sixth century and the ninth it was committed to writing. It first took the shape of marginal notes on the copies of the sacred books. These gradually expanded into a very minute and comprehensive system. A full record of these annotations and glosses was given in the "Great Massorah," which appeared about the eleventh century, and is so called to distinguish it from another collection of notes, known as the "Small Massorah." While much of what is contained in the Massorah is nothing but laborious trifling, yet quite apart from this there is much that is of very great use to the critical student. The authors have sometimes been charged with corrupting the sacred text, but for this there seems to be no solid foundation. They do not appear to have introduced anything of their own, but rather to have made a careful distinction between what they found in the manuscripts and what they proposed to substitute. There can be no doubt that they have thus preserved to us much traditional information of the highest value. In the words of Professor E. C. Bissell, "There ought to be no doubt that in the text which we inherit from the Massoretes, and they from the Talmudists, and they in turn from a period when versions and paraphrases of the Scriptures in other languages now accessible to us were in common use—the same text being transmitted to this period from the time of Ezra under the peculiarly sacred seal of the Jewish canon—we have a substantially correct copy of the original documents, and one worthy of all confidence." *Chambers.*

*Targums.* One of the languages into which most of the Hebrew Scripture was rendered centuries ago is a sister tongue of Hebrew, the Aramaic. Closely allied to Hebrew, if not itself spoken by the ancestors of the Israelites in their Eastern home, this language began to exercise a decided influence upon the language of the Jews, even before their captivity in Babylonia (605–536 ? B.C.), as is plain from the Aramaisms in the biblical books of the time, and by 200 B.C. it had actually displaced the mother-tongue as the language of ordinary life. Hence soon after this, if they were to understand their Scriptures, the common people must have translations in the vernacular; and these Aramaic—incorrectly called "Chaldee," from the supposed use of Aramaic by the Babylonians (Chaldæans)—translations, made for Jews who had adopted the Aramaic language,—a part of them literal, and a part of them paraphrastic,—are called *Targums*. A growth may be traced in these Targums. The germs of them all lie in the oral renderings, explanations, and illustrations which were added when single terms, or usages, or allusions, in the Hebrew Scriptures were no longer understood. The translators in the synagogue were allowed considerable freedom. Literal renderings doubtless grew into paraphrases, and these, in turn, developed into legendary matter only remotely connected with the original text. Hence arose numerous additions to, and variations from, the Hebrew original. From about the beginning of our era we may date the written composition of Targums, which continued for several centuries in Palestine and Babylonia. *C. R. Brown.*

### *Grounds of Belief in the O. T. Canon.*

We believe in the present canon of the Old Testament, because it is the canon which Christ had; of which he said: "Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me." He quoted it by divisions, as the "law and the prophets;" by the authors, as "Moses;" so also did the apostles. Josephus, the great Jewish historian, born near the time of Christ's death; the contemporary of Christ, Philo; the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Scriptures made 300 B.C., and which Christ and the apostles quoted from as Scripture; and the canon of the Jews, which they have guarded with jealous care—all go to prove that we have in the Old Testament the very Testament which Christ used and approved as the word of God. *A. A. Hodge.*——Although Christ frequently reproved the rulers and teachers of the Jews for their erroneous and false doctrines, yet he never accused them of any corruption in their written Law, or other sacred books: and Paul reckons among the privileges of the Jews, "that unto them were committed the oracles of God," without insinuating that they had been unfaithful to their trust. After the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the dispersion of the Jews into all countries, and the numerous converts to Christianity, became a double security for the preservation of a volume held

equally sacred by Jews and Christians, and to which both constantly referred as to the written word of God. They differed in the interpretation of these books, but never disputed the validity of the text in any material point. . . . The books of the Old Testament have been always allowed, in every age, and by every sect of the Hebrew Church, to be the genuine works of those persons to whom they are usually ascribed ; and they have also been, universally and exclusively, without any addition or exception, considered by the Jews as written under the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit. "We have not," says Josephus, "myriads of books which differ from each other, but only twenty-two books, which comprehend the history of all past time, and are justly believed to be Divine. After so long a lapse of time no one has dared to add to them, or to diminish from them, or to alter anything in them ; for it is implanted in the nature of all Jews, immediately from their birth, to consider these books as the oracles of God, to adhere to them, and, if occasion should require, cheerfully to die for their sake." *Tomline.*——If any fact with respect to the Scripture may be looked upon as established, this is one : that to the great body of Jews of the first century of our era, learned and unlearned, of Palestine and of the wide dispersion, there existed a highly revered canon of Old Testament books. This collection had been received and was treasured as a sacred inheritance from the distant past. It was composed of exactly the books. and no others, that we now find within it. *Bissell.*

But the most decisive proof of the authenticity and inspiration of the ancient Scriptures, is derived from the New Testament. The Saviour of the world himself, in the last instructions to his Apostles, said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." Our Lord, by thus adopting the common division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures, ratified the Canon of the Old Testament as it was received by the Jews ; and by declaring that those books contained prophecies which must be fulfilled, he established their Divine inspiration, since God alone can enable men to foretell future events. At another time Christ told the Jews that they made "the Word of God of none effect through their traditions." By thus calling the written rules which the Jews had received for the conduct of their lives, "the Word of God," he declared that the Hebrew Scriptures proceeded from God himself. Upon many other occasions Christ referred to the ancient Scriptures as books of Divine authority ; and both he and his Apostles constantly endeavored to prove that Jesus was the Messiah foretold in the writings of the Prophets. *Tomline.*——Of the law he affirmed that not one jot or tittle should in any wise pass from it till all was fulfilled. When he quoted from David he affirmed that the psalmist "spake in the Spirit," or "by the Holy Ghost." He declared that "the Scriptures must be fulfilled." He exhorted his hearers to "search the Scriptures," and he made one of his arguments turn on the declaration that "the Scriptures cannot be broken." And if we may take the words of those who were his daily companions for years or were specially instructed by himself, as representing his views, then the manner in which Peter quoted from the ancient Scripture on the day of Pentecost and the fact that he declares that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; the assertion of Paul that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and the method in which that apostle constantly treats the Old Testament in his epistles ; the allegation of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that God spoke to the fathers by the prophets, and the formula by which the same writer cites from the book of Psalms, saying, "wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith," all indicate that in the view of our Lord and his apostles the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God, and is of infallible authority. W. M. T. —— Our Lord never recognizes any other authority on earth than the Scriptures of the Old Testament. He recognizes in his teaching no human authority, and he does recognize absolutely the authority of his heavenly Father. Whatever recognition, then, he gives to the authority of the Old Testament, can only be on the ground of its having proceeded from his Father. *Gardiner.*——Christ and his apostles rested the claims of their own doctrine principally on the fact that it had its roots deep in the Old Testament revelation, and drew sap and strength from that generous soil. So completely have they thrown the protection of their authority over the ancient Scriptures, that they impose on us the necessity of either admitting the Divine authorship of these writings, or questioning the Divine authorship of their own. It is impossible for any mind, imbued even slightly with logical perception, to admit Christ and his apostles as infallible teachers, and yet repudiate the Old Testament as of doubtful au-

thority, or of inferior authority to the New. *Brit. Quar.*

*Special Points of Fact and Teaching.*

It is clear that from none of the religions of the ancient world could the religion of the ancient Hebrews have originated. Judaism stands apart from all other ancient religions, offering the sharpest contrast to the systems prevalent in the rest of the East, and so entirely different from them in its spirit and essence that its origin could not but have been distinct and separate. And the sacred Books of the Hebrews cannot possibly have been derived from the sacred writings of any of the Eastern nations. G. R., "*Religions of Anc. World.*"

The *contents of the Old Testament* were written at different times : the various writers were unknown to each other. Like the writers of the New, the greater part of them were exposed to suffering and persecution on account of their doctrine ; the times in which they wrote were remote from each other ; their compositions were delivered to the people, and were preserved by the priests in their unconnected form. One primary object was principally intended by each writer, and by every paragraph ; yet all these miscellaneous compositions, when they are put together, are found to contain a perfect history, confirmed by the testimony of all other authenticated histories. The researches of the learned and the enterprising have alike contributed to demonstrate the truth of the narrative, which is so wonderfully complete in itself, that ingenuity has been in vain engaged for two thousand years, in attempting to discover some imposition, or to overthrow one recorded fact. The history, therefore, contained in the Bible, is true, and the system of infidelity is consequently false, or all the writers of the Old Testament without exception were impostors, or dupes, and every history of ancient nations is not to be credited, or, what is still more difficult to suppose, all ancient history is uniformly falsified in those particulars which corroborate the sacred Scriptures. G. T.

Not only is the thought of the New Testament, in all its determining elements and outlines, the thought of the Old, but the *meanings* of all its central and distinguishing terms are, in origin and substance, Old Testament conceptions. *An.——Foundations lie in the Old Testament; republication, explication in the New.* All the distinctive elements of the constitution of the Church of God are found in the Abrahamic covenant. The Gospel, therefore, is not a laying down of new foundations. The old, the eternal, the immutable foundations had been put down long before. In view of this truth, how perfectly natural is the face of the Scriptures ! The new edition of the old covenant does indeed republish and explain with more or less clearness and fulness, every essential element of the Church ; but it takes care to keep us apprised that these are matters already made known in the prior revelation. *J. C. Styles.*

The complete *absence of all sectionalism* lies on the face and in the heart of the Old Testament ; not only in the declared scope of all the redemptive promises, which are always *to man* through the Jew, but in the very structure of Scripture. Moses, it has been rightly said, and not Herodotus, is the father of history. For Herodotus writes as a Greek, with the prepossession and prejudices of the Greek : Moses writes as a man. Herodotus is sectional, Moses is universal. Moses alone has the cosmopolitan spirit, the inclusive human outlook and sympathy. Only he goes back to the origin of man, gives us a history, and a philosophy of the history, of humanity. And we could better afford to lose, as reminders of our common origin and as incentives to lofty endeavor and far-reaching hope, the whole literature of Greece and Rome, than the first eleven chapters of Genesis, for these contain the only universal history that antiquity has bequeathed to us. *Behrends.*

An important fact to be remembered is the *gradualness* of Divine Revelation. Like the subsequent spread of the Gospel, it was " first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." This inchoate, preparatory, and in this sense, imperfect character is ascribed to the Old Testament system, both in the Old Testament itself and in the New. The whole form of the kingdom of God in the earlier dispensation was provisional ; the disclosure of God was partial and increasing ; laws fell short of the absolute standard of moral duty ; rites were adapted to religious feelings and to perceptions not yet mature ; the type of character corresponded to the inadequate conceptions of God ; the ethical and emotional expressions answered to the several stages of revelation to which they pertained. All this ought to be as familiar to readers of the Bible as the alphabet Unhappily, it has often been overlooked by Christians and persistently ignored by adversaries of Christianity. Now an application of the fact of the gradualness and partialness of revelation will remove most, if not all, of the moral difficulties which are raised with regard to the Old Testament. Whoever discerns distinctly this fact--which is a perfectly manifest fact—will

have gained a point of view where the major part of these difficulties disappear of themselves. Without this historical sense, without a sympathetic appreciation of the condition of mankind in the far-distant ages when the movement of revelation began, the old dispensation and the Old Testament can never be understood. Those who have no dislike for the New Testament, but have only hard works for the Old, who can honor the heavenly Father of whom Christ speaks, but find the Jehovah of the law and the prophets repulsive, may be compared to one who relishes a ripe and juicy peach, but has no patience with the rough and bitter peach-stone from which the tree sprang. *G. P. Fisher.*

*Vice and crime* are described, when the purpose of the Scripture narrative requires, with antique plainness of speech shocking to our modern taste. The failings and sins of good men are recorded with merciless candor. But never can one detect a trace of sympathy with vileness, cruelty, intemperance, or falsehood. Even those terrible denunciations of transgressors which modern readers are often at a loss to reconcile with the spirit of the Gospel, draw their severity from that intense moral indignation against wrong in which modern sentiment is defective ; and which in those rough times was a needful safeguard of moral purity. Yet the religion of the Bible is no less remarkable for its tenderness than for its severe purity. Once in five hundred or a thousand years, when morality is on the brink of perishing among men, the sword of justice smites and spares not. Hostile criticism, blind because hostile, fixes on these rare and long-deferred examples of divine severity (always prefaced by forbearance and warning) and overlooks the fact that the prevailing representation of the divine character places mercy, compassion, kindness, tenderness among its foremost attributes. *E. R. Conder.*—— The Old Testament gives us, in its weird, solemn, and beautiful scenes, no such being as The Great Unknown, or The Great First Cause ; but it gives us for our reverence, our worship, our obedience, our love, and our fear,—a heavenly Father, who bows his head over his children in infinite love, mercy, and pity. *Harlow.*

*Typology.* Where Christ and the apostles have found a type, or an allegory, or a pregnant construction in the Old Testament, we may follow them with confidence ; but beyond the limits set by their example in the use of these modes of interpretation it becomes us to proceed with caution. G. F. W.——Conceiving the strictly proper and distinctive sphere of a *type* to lie in the relations of the old to the new, of the earlier to the later, in God's dispensations, —there are two things which, by general consent, are held to enter into the constitution of a type. It is held, first, that in the character, action, or institution which is denominated the *type*, there must be a resemblance in form or spirit to what answers to it under the Gospel ; and secondly, that it must not be *any* character, action, or institution occurring in Old Testament Scripture, but such only as had their ordination of God, and were designed by him to foreshadow and prepare for the better things of the Gospel. For, as Bishop Marsh has justly remarked, " to constitute one thing the type of another, something more is wanted than mere resemblance. The former must not only resemble the latter, but must have been *designed* to resemble the latter. It must have been so designed in its original institution. It must have been designed as something preparatory to the latter. The type as well as the antitype must have been preordained ; and they must have been preordained as constituent parts of the same general scheme of Divine Providence. It is this *previous design* and this *preordained* connection [together, of course, with the resemblance], which constitute the relation of type and antitype." We insert, *together with the resemblance ;* for, while stress is justly laid on the previous design and preordained connection, the resemblance also forms an indispensable element in this very connection.

We lay down the following positions :—First, That the *historical relations and circumstances* recorded in the Old Testament, and typically applied in the New, had very much both the same resemblances and defects in respect to the realities of the Gospel, which belong to the ancient symbolical institutions of worship ; secondly, that such historical types were absolutely necessary, in considerable number and variety, to render the earlier dispensations thoroughly preparative in respect to the coming dispensation of the Gospel ; and, thirdly, that Old Testament Scripture itself contains undoubted indications, that much of its historical matter stood related to some higher ideal, in which the truths and relations exemplified in them were again to meet and receive a new but more perfect development. P. F.

### *Old Testament Unity.*

The intimate blending of history and religion, the first great characteristic of the Hebrew Scriptures, is the condition of two other characteristics : *unity and development.* Develop-

ment implies unity. And the unity is a unity of growth, not formal and mechanical, but vital, internal, spiritual. Clearly, if the books of the Old Testament possess any real unity, it must be of this nature. For they do not compose *a Book* in any ordinary sense of the word. They are a library, a literature. Their writers differ widely in character, genius, education, position. They reflect the most opposite phases of national life. Diversity of contents and variety of form could scarcely be more strongly exemplified than in this collection of annals, laws, biography, poems, aphorisms, prophetic oracles. If the unity of these sacred writings were merely artificial and conventional, conferred by authority and custom, it would dissolve at the touch of serious examination. If, on the contrary, deep below this diversified and broken surface we find a unity of thought, an unbroken vein of religious teaching, growing richer from age to age, then this unity is a fact more important than the diversity. If natural causes cannot explain it, we must infer supernatural. If human authors could not (or manifestly did not) combine to produce it, the only possible explanation is Divine authorship. *E. R. Conder.*

The Old Testament historiography is throughout the special history of the people of God, of the kingdom of God in the earth in a definite form, *the Theocracy.* The subject of its records is the internal development of this people in their covenant-relation to Jehovah, with which everything external is connected only as the outward and visible form, requiring a constant reference to that inward and essential principle. Hence it is only where the covenant people come in contact with other nations that anything foreign is brought into the circle of Old Testament history. Hence also the history becomes silent or defective whenever the theocratic idea recedes as a fact into the background. *Hävernick.*

*Unity of the Old and New Testaments.*

They are both the records of the kingdom of God on earth,—the one indicating the form which this kingdom assumed when in its preparatory stage, within the limits of a nation and the limitations of a stringent legal code, both of which were intended, according to the Divine plan, to prepare the way for the time when this kingdom could become the common property of all in a higher and spiritualized sense ; the other record showing how this ideal aim and goal of the earlier dispensation became a history and a fact through Christ and his work. They both represent the two great historical phases of the unfolding and growth of the one kingdom of God on earth ; and in this thought they find their central idea and their connecting link. They claim to be, and are, the announcement of the plan of God for the salvation of mankind, and are the historical records of how this plan gradually, and through many centuries, was unfolded and grew, internally and externally, until in Christ and the Christian Church it found its consummation and final shape. All the Scriptures start out from the premises that man, through sin, fell from his high estate, and on account of his transgressions was no longer acceptable in the sight of God. Sin caused a rupture between the Creator and the creature ; and this dire fact stands at the head of all revelation, and forms the outward occasion of all of God's deeds for man, which all have for their one aim the re-establishment of the original relation between him and his creature, the redemption of man from the consequences of sin.

But, in the nature of things, redemption and salvation could not be forced upon man. As he had of his own free will torn himself away from God, so, too, he was of his own free will to accept the restoration offered. For this, a long educational process was necessary. This God effected through the establishment of a covenant or special relation between himself and his creature. The establishment of this covenant with the whole race through the family of Noah proved unsuccessful. Accordingly, God determined to select one man and one nation to be the recipients of this great historical mission. That man was Abraham, and that people was Israel. In order to make effective the terms of this covenant, Jehovah takes Abraham from his native land, away from the idolatrous temptations of his family, and removes him to the Land of Promise. There he formally enters into the covenant with him, the terms of which are, that, if Abraham will have faith and implicit confidence in the Lord's guidance, he shall become blessed, and the father of God s chosen people. The covenant with Abraham is thus based upon faith (Gen. 15 : 6 ; Gal. 3 : 6 ; Rom. 4 : 3).

When the family grew into the nation, the covenant also assumed a national form. In order to effect in the nation what the word and personal intercourse with God had effected in the individual,—namely, the conviction that faith in Jehovah was the only means of righteousness and acceptance before the Lord, and of a restoration of man,—he gives to Israel the Sinaitic law. The purpose of this law was in

nowise to form a norm according to which Israel should walk and worship in order to prove acceptable before God, for the purpose of regaining what had been lost through sin ; but rather its object was, by showing Israel what the just claims of the Lord of covenant were, how little they could comply with these demands, and how much they needed a dependence and faith in the pardoning grace of their God. The aim of the law was to be a schoolmaster unto Christ (Gal. 3 : 24). How little the law itself claims to be the basis of righteousness in the Old Testament economy, is apparent from the sacrificial system and its typical character, whose real import is so well portrayed by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Side by side with the law and its negative purpose of awakening in man the need of divine pardon and of a Redeemer, we find prophecy proclaiming the advent, at the proper time, of him who alone could save and deliver. From the protevangelism in Genesis 3 to the evangelistic prophecies of Isaiah 53, there is a golden chain of divine promises going through the whole Old Testament revelation concerning the coming of a Saviour. The law and the Messianic prophecies are the two leading features of the Old Testament economy, mutually complementary, and both combining in effecting that education of Israel, and that unfolding and development in the kingdom of God, which was necessary in order to have man prepared for salvation, and salvation prepared for man. Their joint mission was a propædeutic one. The one ended with the question for a Deliverer, and in types and symbols endeavored to get a foretaste of the mercies he would bring ; the other declared that such a Saviour would, at the proper time, make his appearance, sent of Jehovah. The legal features of the old dispensation pointed to the need of a Saviour ; the prophets proclaimed his advent ; the psalmists and other Old Testament writers show how the pious grew in this faith, and how their religious life and beliefs were developed under such a covenant.

The character of the Old Testament development is thus entirely of a preparatory kind, which preparation, however, finds its completion in the New. The Old ends with a question, the New furnishes the answer. And just as necessary as the question is to the answer, and the answer to the question, just so necessary is the Old Testament to the New, and the New to the Old. In principle they are the same, both basing upon faith all righteousness and the restoration to the lost estate. Both point to a Redeemer, to Christ, as the only foundation of hope. They differ in this, that the Old represents the preparatory state of God's kingdom, and the growth of his plan for man's redemption in a particularistic form within the national limits of one people and country, and under the outer hedge of a rigorous law ; the New announces how the promises of the Old have become glorious facts through Christ's coming into the flesh, removes the national barrier, and calls into the kingdom of God all the nations whom God had so far suffered to go according to their own will, and spiritualizes the kingdom by a removal of the ceremonial features of the law,—that is, those features which were intended under the old covenant to hedge into a national and local theocracy the kingdom—and makes the obedience of faith the mark of an acceptable life. *Schodde.*

The law, the types, the history, the prophecies, and the promises of the Old Testament all progressively unfold and develop the same truth, until it appears at last in its New Testament fulness. Though all testify of the same thing, not one of them could safely be left out, nor yet do we properly understand any one part unless we view it in its bearing and connection with the others. And so when at last we come to the close of Scripture, we see how the account of the creation and of the first calling of the children of God, which had been recorded in Genesis, has found its full counterpart and fulfilment in the Revelation, which tells the glories of the second creation and the perfecting of the Church of God.

That this one grand purpose should have been steadily kept in view, and carried forward through all the vicissitudes of history, changes of time, and stages of civilization,—and that without requiring any alteration, only further unfolding and at last completion,—affords indeed the strongest confirmation to our faith. It is also a precious comfort to our hearts ; for we see how God's purpose of mercy has been always the same ; and, walking the same pilgrim-way which " the fathers" had trod, and along which God had safely guided the Covenant, we rejoice to know that neither opposition of man nor yet unfaithfulness on the part of his professing people can make void the gracious counsel of God. And this it is which we learn from the unity of Scripture. A. E.

### *Christ the Centre of Unity*

The unity of the Old and New Testaments is found in the person and work of Christ. *Thus* it is that " the Old Testament is not contrary to

the New; for both in the Old and the New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man." Nothing is more remarkable in the Old Testament, nothing is a more distinct and irrefragable proof of its inspired authority, than this interdependence of the two dispensations—"the Old Testament containing the germ and nucleus of the New, the new containing the realization and fulfilment of the Old, not as a matter of contrivance, but as a matter of broad and patent history, so that the two parts correspond like a cloven tally."

In the Old Testament Christ is prefigured; in the New he is revealed. In his teaching we see in all their fulness those constant elements which all religion strives more and more clearly to express—the holiness and love of God, the dignity and brotherhood of man. And so he stands at the centre of all history as the fulfilment of all the yearnings of the past, the justification of all the hopes of the future. Apart from him all the deepest elements of the Old Testament become unintelligible. The Law is but the slave which leads us to his school (Gal. 3 : 21). He is the bruiser of the serpent's head in Genesis, and the Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the throne in Revelation; he is the Paschal Lamb of Moses; the true star and sceptre of Balaam's vision; the promised Son of David; Isaiah's rod of the stem of Jesse; him whose testimony is the spirit of prophecy, and of whom bear all the prophets witness, as many as have spoken from Samuel and those that follow after. *Farrar.*

Christ, then, is the end of the history as well as of the law of the Old Testament. It had been strange, indeed, if it were otherwise; strange if its historical transactions had not been ordained by God to bear a prospective reference to the scheme of grace unfolded in the Gospel.

For what is this scheme itself, in its fundamental character, but a grand historical development? What are the doctrines it teaches, the blessings it imparts, and the prospects it discloses of coming glory, but the ripened fruit and issue of the wondrous facts it records? The things which are there written of the incarnation and life, the death and resurrection, of the Lord Jesus Christ, are really the foundation on which all rests—the root from which everything springs in Christianity. And shall it, then, be imagined, that the earlier facts in the history of related and preparatory dispensations did not point, like so many heralds and forerunners, to these unspeakably greater ones to come? If a prophecy lay concealed in their symbolical rites, could it fail to be found also in the historical transactions that were often so closely allied to these, and always coincident with them in purpose and design? Assuredly not. In so far as God spake in the transactions, and gave discoveries by them of his truth and character, they pointed onward to the one "Pattern Man," and the terminal kingdom of righteousness and blessing of which he was to be the head and centre. Here only the history of God's earlier dispensations attained its proper end, as in it also the history of the world rose to its true greatness and glory. P. F.

The gospel of the grace of God—the incarnation, the death, the kingdom of our Lord—is the development and the fulfilment of the first promise, and, it may be added, of the promise made to Abraham and to David. Christ as Messiah stands alone in both Testaments,—one with his people, and yet apart from them. In him alone the types and predictions of the ancient law have their real fulfilment. *Angus.*

Old Testament Scripture does contain undoubted marks and indications of its historical personages and events being related to some higher ideal, in which the truths and relations exhibited in them were again to meet, and obtain a more perfect development. The proof of this is to be sought chiefly in the prophetical writings of the Old Testament, in which the more select instruments of God's Spirit gave expression to the Church's faith respecting both the past and the future in his dispensations. And in looking there, we find. not only that an exalted personage, with his work of perfect righteousness, and his kingdom of consummate bliss and glory, was seen to be in prospect, but also that the expectations cherished of what was to be, took very commonly the form of a new and higher exhibition of what had already been. P. F.——The books of the Bible—the two Testaments—have always pointed, with more or less clearness, to a coming man (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) through whom sin is to be forgiven, and the final victory over evil is to be achieved. He is first spoken of as the seed of the woman (itself a contradictory expression), a brother-man; then as the descendant of Abraham; then as the other prophet taken from the people—a second Joshua—of whom Moses speaks; then as priest after the order of Melchisedec, and after the high-priesthood of Aaron; and then finally, when the kingdom came to be established in the person of David, as a second David ("the beloved one," as the name means—for "David my servant shall rule over them"), or more commonly

as David's son—the true Solomon, the prince of peace—who is to reign over the church and over the nations.

This personal Christ, this realization of types and prophecies which may be numbered by hundreds, this Gospel Incarnate, appears and reappears throughout that economy, not yet as an object of exact knowledge, but of hope and trust. All the prophets bear witness to him. The mothers of the race that knew of his coming wondered, from Eve downward, when and through whom he was to appear ; and our Lord claims again and again to have fulfilled these types and predictions. We are not dealing, therefore, with fanciful interpretations. We are repeating the assertions of the great Teacher himself. The law—a system of righteousness (which it rather demanded than produced) and of shadows—was given through Moses ; the gospel—grace and truth (the reality, shadows no more)—came to be through Jesus Christ. Again and again he appealed to prophets who wrote and spoke of him ; and rebuked his disciples, who were slow to learn and hard to believe what, in the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms—the Jewish Bible—was written of him. *Angus.* ——Our Lord everywhere refers to the Old Testament as to the word of God, and the record of God's earlier manifestations of himself to man. He has cleared up those especial points in it which might have most perplexed us, and he represents himself as the perpetual subject of its prophecies. We thus receive the Old Testament from his hand, and learn while sitting at his feet to understand the lessons of the law and the prophets. Thus we make Christ the centre of both Testaments, and by so doing we cannot be blind to the divinity pervading both. For the amazing fact that God should come into the world and be in the world cannot by possibility stand alone ; it hallows the whole period of the world's existence, placing all time and every place in relation to God ; it disposes us at once to receive the fact of the special call of the people of Israel ;—it gives an *à priori* reason why there must have been in earlier times some shadows, at least, or images, to represent dimly to former generations that great thing which they were not actually to witness ; it leads us to believe that there must have been some prophetic voices to announce the future coming of the Lord, or else "The very stones must have cried out." *T. Arnold.*

### *Unity in Teaching and Spirit.*

The New Testament is ever Old, and the Old is ever entwined with the New The types of the Old Testament are shadows of good things to come ; the narratives of events and lives of persons in Jewish history are "written for our instruction ;" there is a deep-rooted identity of the Old and New Testament in the revelation of one God of perfect justice and truth ; the law is fulfilled in Christ to all them that believe ; the spiritual Israel are the true people of God ; and even the language and imagery of the Old, the words themselves as well as the thoughts contained in them, become instinct with a new life, and seem to interpenetrate with the Gospel. *Jowett.*——An immense intercommunion of strength and security the two great departments of Scripture give to each other—the Old Testament by its prophecies mightily confirming the divinity and inspiration of the New ; and the New by its manifold quotations, extending to almost every separate book, conferring on the earlier record the whole benefit of its own appropriate and distinct evidences. *Chalmers.*

The connection of the Old with the New is something more than typical, in the sense of foreshadowing, or formally imagining what was to come ; it is also inward and organic. Amid the ostensible differences there is a pervading unity of spirit and design—one faith, one life, one hope, one destiny. And while the Old Testament Church, in its outward condition and earthly relations, typically adumbrated the spiritual and heavenly things of the New, it was also, in so far as it realized and felt the truth of God presented to it, the living root out of which the New ultimately sprang. The beginnings were there of all that exists in comparative perfection now. P. F.——The relation of the New Testament to the Old is such that both stand or fall together. The New Testament assumes the existence of the Old Testament law and prophecy as a positive presupposition. We cannot have the redeeming God of the New Covenant without the Creator and covenant God preached in the Old ; we cannot disconnect the Redeemer from the Old Testament predictions he came to fulfil. No New Testament idea, indeed, is fully set forth in the Old, but *the genesis* of all the ideas of the New Testament relating to salvation lies in the Old Testament. To gain the true sense of Scripture we must not put aside everything that is Israelitish. The history contained in Scripture being the *history of Israel*, is what makes it Holy Scripture ; for Israel is the people whose history is the call to salvation. "*Salvation is of the Jews*," said our Lord to the woman of Samaria. Not to conceal God from the world, but to re-

veal him to the world as the Holy One of whom heathenism is ignorant, is the work for which Israel was chosen. In Israel such living forces were implanted, that it was only from this people that the God-man, the Redeemer of the world, could be born. The whole national figure of Israel ; the election and the rejection ; the curse that lies upon the nation, all these are *revelations* of God to the world. O.

The basis of theology is the Bible, and that of the New Testament is the Old. It is impossible to understand the former aright without a previous understanding of the latter ; for Christianity proceeded from Judaism, and the genius of the language in both books is the same. Let a man gather into his own mind the abundant riches of the former, and he will never become in the latter one of those smatterers who, barren and without taste or feeling, desecrate these sacred things. *Herder.*——The New Testament writers were Hebrews, who took the old Hebrew thought, modified and complemented it. They had their thinking and their teaching continually shaped by the institutions and ideas of the Old Testament. From the Old Testament they drew the greater part of what they taught. To attempt, therefore, to reach the real meaning of the New Testament without recognizing, not merely that there is a connection between it and the Old Testament, but as well that Old Testament ideas are the very centre and soul of it, is to ignore all the facts relating both to the historical development of Christianity itself, and to the gradual reception of the New Testament as authoritative and divine. . . . The New Testament has, in no sense, superseded or abrogated the Old ; nor is its teaching a different teaching from that of the Old, if, by different, it is meant to imply any degree of opposition. God and man in the Old Testament are not other than they are in the New. The God of the Old Testament is, in his character, and in his essential relations to man, just what God is declared to be in the New Testament. There is not one way of salvation, one law of life, one code of ethics, in the Old Testament, and another, or a different, in the New. God is not doing one work in the world according to one set of principles, as he is presented to us in the Old Testament, and another according to new and different principles, as seen in the New. The work is, in both cases, essentially the same The form of it may change indeed ; but even thus, the new form is only the result and development of the old form. God's purpose for man is ever the same ; his essential relations to him always unchanged ; the principles on which he deals with him for good or for ill, eternally fixed, for they lie in his own immutable nature. It must be, therefore, that the New Testament doctrine owes both substance and form to the same essentials that underlie and shape the teaching of the Old Testament. Revelation is a unity. But it is also a development. *S. Burnham.*——Christ and his apostles build on the Old Testament revelation concerning the creation, the fall of man, and the law which witnesses against sin, all their doctrines, which are only developments of the earlier truths on these subjects ; and likewise they explain and determine more accurately what of ancient prophecy has been already fulfilled, and what is in course of fulfilment in Christian times. The grace and the truth of the Gospel are therefore unintelligible without the law ; for how can we understand the gift of grace without the fact of sin to be forgiven ? or how can we understand the power of truth unless we are acquainted with the shadows which have gone before ? Where the indissoluble connection of the Old and New Testament is lost sight of, there inevitably will their contents be misunderstood, and perverted at pleasure. *Gerl.*

What is unfolded in the Scriptures is one great economy of salvation—*unum continuum systema*, as Bengel puts it—an organism of divine acts and testimonies, which, beginning in Genesis with the creation, advances progressively to its completion in the person and work of Christ, and is to find its close in the new heaven and earth predicted in the Apocalypse ; and it is only in connection with this whole that the details can be properly estimated. O.——True religion, as a system of doctrine and as a state of heart—objective religion and subjective, as John Howe called it—has been substantially the same in every age. From the earliest times there has been a revelation of the unity of God, with intimations of a Spirit brooding over the waters, the Author and Giver of life ; and of one who has in him the divine name, the angel of the divine presence ; of the creation and upholding of all things by divine power ; of a Providence (though the word is not found in the Old Testament) that sees and guides all ; of a divine law fixing the distinctions of right and wrong ; of the fall and depravity of man ; of the doctrine of forgiveness through vicarious suffering ; of the duty and power of prayer ; of human responsibility, notwithstanding the certainty involved in the divine foreknowledge, or even of a divine purpose ; of the necessity of personal holiness ; of a judgment which will, first or last, give every man according to his works. Sim-

ilarly, subjective religion has never changed. It has always been faith and penitence, love and obedience ; faith in the divine righteousness and mercy, though how these were to be reconciled in the forgiveness of the guilty was long imperfectly revealed ; the feeling that we need to be forgiven ; the love and the desire of holiness. These beliefs and feelings, when accepted by the will and moulding the life, make religious men, and have been taught and enforced under every economy and in every age. *Angus.*

The so-called Pauline doctrines are all based by him upon the letter of the Old Testament. He was enabled, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to grasp and comprehend the fulness of meaning that was contained in the letter of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant. Five truths are stated most fully and systematically in the Epistle to the Romans : The universality of sin, justification by faith only, the doctrine of Election, the rejection of Israel and calling of Gentiles, and the ultimate conversion of all Israel. Each of these came with the force of a new truth to those who heard the Apostle. Each of these important doctrines is shown to be contained in the ancient Scriptures, where they had lain hid for centuries till brought to light by the teaching of the Spirit as impressed upon the great Apostle to the Gentiles. "*Expositor.*"

——There is no principal phase of the Old Testament teachings, ceremonial, ethical, or spiritual, which the New Testament writers do not take up and adapt to their new conditions. There is scarcely one of its great characters who is not vividly reproduced in person or doctrine. A recent volume reckons the number of Old Testament quotations in the New at about six hundred. But this makes no account of a multitude of passages which have simply taken on the familiar coloring of the ancient Scriptures without directly citing them. It is not too much to say that the whole warp of the New Testament is borrowed from the Old. The golden woof only is Christian. *Bissell.*

*Devotional Character of the Old Testament.* How precious is the Old Testament as a book of devotion and experimental piety ! Where shall we find such noble examples of faith which no difficulties could overcome, of a hope which no disaster cou'd quench, no delays enfeeble, of a delight in God and God's service which cast all other joys into the shade, and of a serene, abiding religiousness, which looked at all things on their God-ward side, and kept the mind that was stayed on God in perfect peace amid all the tumults and griefs and shadows of time ? Not even in the New Testament itself are such depths of religious experience laid open, such illustrations of the laws and phenomena of the spiritual life afforded, as in those records of the struggles and the deliverances, the vicissitudes and the victories of the saints of the former age. It makes one's heart strong to study them. It stirs us up to quit us like men in the never-ceasing spiritual warfare, to read how these men of the old time, amid the twilight of their dispensation, strengthened themselves in the Lord, and fought their way through to " the city which hath foundations," where they now rest and reign. *Brit. Quar.*

*Study of Old Testament.* Where the writings of the Old Testament are lightly esteemed, or carelessly scanned by Christian teachers, we can never expect to see a just apprehension of the New Testament writings. Most certain it is that of those who have borne or achieved great things for the cause of God, the greater part were wont to feed their spiritual energies at the banquet which these ancient Scriptures provided. Paul and Augustine, Luther and Knox, Cromwell and Milton, the Puritans and the Covenanters, all of them were men whose deepest inspirations were drawn from those old Hebrew oracles. *Brit. Quar.*

What is, perhaps, more needed than anything else to deepen, to give breadth and continuity to theological thought, is a deper, closer and completer study of the *Old Testament Scriptures.* It was in the lifelong knowledge of these Scriptures that they had lived whom yet the merciful Lord upbraided as *foolish and slow of heart to believe,* whose understandings He had to open *that they might understand the Scriptures, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,* and *expounding unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* Now as then, it is only the Divine Eternal Word who, through his in-breathed Holy Spirit, can enable men to see clearly throughout the Bible its one great subject, which is himself, in whose light alone can we see light. *Medd.*

Both in the Old Testament and the New we have type and symbol, narrative and precept, parable and miracle ; but the sunlight which alone can interpret and glorify their highest meaning, must come from him who is the Light of the world and the Sun of righteousness. *Farrar.*

# Section 8.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT:

### CRITICAL VIEWS AND METHODS; CHRONOLOGY; ASSYRIAN DISCOVERY.

*Critical Views and Methods.* Christianity inculcates firmness of conviction, while it encourages freedom of investigation. It welcomes the most incisive and exhaustive criticism; but it insists that the criticism shall be unprejudiced, reverent and righteous in its attitude toward the truth. There is a criticism that is simply negative and destructive; it tears down, but does not build up; it takes delight in undermining traditional creeds; it has no faith in the good. Opposed to this is the true criticism, which holds fast that which is good, all that has been tested, while it proves all that is new. It is reverent toward the past, and hopeful for the future. It cannot grant that men have believed only in lies, nor can it admit that the full-orbed truth must ever elude man's search. It believes in the Holy Ghost as abiding in the Church. It finds the good in the past, the present, and the future; and every grain of gold that it may succeed in discovering or rescuing, it reverently and joyfully adds to its growing treasury, whose wealth it guards with sacred jealousy. *Behrends.*

There are *two views of the Old Testament:* the historical, or traditional; and the rationalistic, or critical, so called. The one is held by the church, the other is held by parties and individuals, sometimes within the church, and sometimes outside of it. The *historical* or *traditional* view is: that the books of the Old Testament are the infallible word of God communicated to a small circle selected out of the people of Israel for this purpose. Certain holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. These books, consequently, do not contain the religious ideas of the Hebrew race, but the teachings of the Supreme Being. The Old Testament, though Hebrew in language and modes of expression and forms of thought, is not Hebrew literature, but Divine revelation; because literature, properly so called, is the natural and spontaneous product of a national mind. The Old Testament is not the development of the common Hebrew mind, as Greek literature is of the Greek mind, and Latin literature is of the Roman; but it is a special disclosure from the Divine mind made only to a limited number of Hebrews, in order that they might teach the Hebrew people as a whole, and through them teach the whole world in matters pertaining to religion. The religion of the Old Testament, consequently, is not one of the natural religions of the globe, but a supernatural religion, different from them in kind, intended to enlighten their darkness, correct their errors, and do a work for sinful man which none of them can do.

By reason of its Divine origin, the Old Testament is an independent book. The accounts in Genesis of the creation and fall, of the deluge and of Babel, were not constructed out of the corresponding accounts that are found in the archives of ancient nations. These latter are not original and co-ordinate materials wrought into the Mosaic narrative, but only echoes and corruptions of a revelation made by God to Adam concerning events that could have no human spectator, and of a testimony concerning events that had human spectators like Seth, Enoch, and Noah. The accounts of the creation, fall, and deluge, handed down in the line of Seth and the patriarchs, were finally combined by Moses, under Divine guidance, into a history of primeval man, which has an accuracy and trustworthiness such as belongs to no uninspired legends or myths.

Originated in this manner, the Old Testament religion, unlike the natural and national religions of the world, is homogeneous in its nature. It is pure monotheism, from first to last; from Genesis to Malachi. From beginning to end, also, it contains the promise and the doctrine of a Redeemer and of Redemption. There is no polytheism, deism, or pantheism, in the religion of Israel as enunciated by Moses and the prophets. The Hebrew people themselves, from time to time, were more or less idolatrous and deistical, but the religion which Jehovah gave them through inspired individuals had nothing of this tincture.

In brief, the Old Testament is a revelation, not an evolution: a revelation from the Divine mind, and not an evolution of the Hebrew mind.

The *rationalistic* or *critical* view is: that the books of the Old Testament are the product of the common Hebrew mind, as this spontaneously developed in a national literature from age to age. The religion of Israel, like the religions of Babylon and Assyria, of Egypt and India, of Greece and Rome, has no uniform and homo-

geneous character. It begins, like all human religions, in polytheism, and passes gradually upward into monotheism. The religion of Israel was at first idolatrous. Traces of fetishism and polytheism are found in the oldest parts of the Pentateuch, which is a composite collection made by several unknown compilers, and of which only a few brief fragments date back of the time of Moses. The religion of the Hebrews at the time of Moses and the Exodus, as shown by other later fragments incorporated into the Pentateuch, was not monotheism, but polytheism, like that of Egypt from which they emigrated, and like that of all the surrounding peoples. Gradually the Hebrew religion improves, through that development of the religious sentiment by which man, generally, grows better and better. In the eighth century before Christ it had become a semi-pagan idolatry, partly monotheistic, as is seen from the writings of the prophets, which differ from the Pentateuch in this particular. Jehovah, the national god, who had previously been worshipped under the form of a bullock in both Judah and Israel, began to be conceived of in a more spiritual manner. In the seventh century before Christ the process was complete in a pure monotheism, which ever afterward continued to be the religion of Israel.

This theory supposes that there was no supernatural revelation of religious truth to the Hebrew people, but only that ordinary unfolding of man's religious nature, which is common to every nation. The books of the Old Testament are a history of this unfolding in the case of the Hebrews, and are no more infallible and entitled to be the rule of religious faith for all mankind than any other books or literatures which contain similar accounts of national religions. In brief, the Old Testament is an evolution, and not a revelation ; an evolution of the Hebrew mind, and not a revelation from the Divine mind.

Such are the two views of the Old Testament. They are antagonistic in every fibre. In the entire history of opinions, there are no two theories that are more hostile and deadly to each other than these.

The latter of these two views calls itself the "critical" theory, but the method by which it is attempted to be established is wholly uncritical. Philological criticism, properly so called, is founded upon the text of an author, as this is settled by manuscripts, and explained by the rules of grammar and logic. The text itself must be determined by the agreement of manuscripts and the general consensus of editors, and not by individual judgment and caprice. And that interpretation of the text which results from the studies and learning of the great majority of scholars and critics must be regarded as the true one, rather than that which is given by a small minority. The Catholic interpretation is the most probable interpretation, in sacred as it is in secular philology. Such is the true critical method universally adopted in profane literature.

The pseudo-critical method, rarely found in profane literature, has been frequently applied to the sacred writings. While the church universal, patristic, mediæval, and protestant, have been unanimous respecting the authenticity and credibility of both the Old and New Testaments, individuals and schools, from time to time, have denied both. They have been of all grades, deistic, pantheistic, and atheistic ; sometimes scoffing and sometimes serious in tone ; but always adopting the same pseudo-critical method, in setting up an individual or a partisan judgment against the catholic.

The learning, industry, and perseverance of German scholars have been more successful than that of any others in attacking the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in the rationalistic method. The endeavor was first made to destroy the credibility of the life of Christ and of the doctrines that depend upon it, by assuming and asserting the spuriousness of large portions of the four gospels, and their late origin. All existing manuscripts and all the early testimonies respecting the gospels and epistles unquestionably favored the traditional opinion respecting their genuineness. Baur and Strauss had no new and different manuscripts to present to scholars, and no new testimony of any force from the first centuries. The only method left to them was conjectural criticism, and a shaping of the text of the gospels and epistles to their preconceived idea of Christ, and of the supernatural generally. Their principal reliance was, the assertion of legendary additions to the text, or else of post-apostolic authorship, whenever the exigency required it. The most arbitrary, and sometimes the most whimsical caprice was introduced into New Testament exegesis, by this so-called "critical" method. By it, nearly the entire New Testament becomes a spurious book. Guericke sums up the result of the Tübingen "criticism" in these words : "Matthew, Mark and Luke are post-apostolic, and more or less legendary ; John's gospel arose far down in the second century ; the Acts of the Apostles was composed long after the death of Peter and Paul, for the

purpose of cloaking over the dissension between these apostles; the Epistle to the Romans is spurious in the last two chapters; Corinthians and Galatians are genuine; but Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians are spurious; the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon are spurious; the Epistles of Peter, John, James and Jude are all spurious; the Revelation of John is genuine—by which is meant, that it is a genuine Ebionitish production full of hatred toward Paul and the Pauline Christianity." Such extravagance as this in the treatment of a collection of writings, the text of which has a stronger support in ancient manuscripts than that of Thucydides or Virgil, reminds one of Jortin's remark concerning a critic of this class, that "his craziness consisted in rejecting what all the world received; the opposite folly to which is the receiving what all the world rejects."

The defence of the New Testament appeared in the same country where the attack was made. German learning, industry and perseverance searched and sifted these postulates and assumptions, and showed their uncritical and unscientific character. The authenticity and credibility of the gospels now rests upon an argument better worked out in certain directions, and more impregnable to a certain class of objections, than it was previously; because Neander, Ebrard, Tholuck, Bleek, Guericke, Christlieb and others were led to defend the historical or ecclesiastical view against the rationalistic schools.

The Old Testament is now the point of attack in Germany and Holland, and this attack has affected Great Britain and America to some extent. It is easier to attack the Old Testament than the New, because it has a far greater antiquity. Building upon the view already described, that the religion of Israel is natural and not supernatural, a human literature and not a divine revelation—a view presented with both genius and learning by Ewald—the school of Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen attempt to prove their points by the same pseudo-critical method, of postulating the spuriousness and late origin of large parts of the Old Testament, and particularly of the Pentateuch. *Shedd.*

The assault on the Old Testament is only a duplicate of the assault on the New Testament begun over fifty years ago, which may be said to have been fought out to the confusion and overthrow of the critics. The problem to which these critics addressed themselves was the critical reconstruction of the New Testament, to show how its books were produced, and in what way Christianity originated. Miracles were declared to be impossible. No amount of testimony could make them credible; in fact, the assumption was regarded as so thoroughly self-evident, that no serious argument was attempted on its behalf. The supernatural in human history was dismissed with a contemptuous sneer. As a consequence, every account in which the miracle was so imbedded as to be involved in its integrity and credibility, was rejected as unhistorical, and was regarded as legendary. But the legend requires time for its appearance and general acceptance. The Gospels, therefore, could not have been written by eye-witnesses. Full of myth and legend as they are, their literary production was assigned to the last quarter of the second century. For the same reason the historical credibility of the book of Acts was assailed, and it was pronounced to have been written in the interests of peace, to soften the antagonisms reported and believed to have existed between the Apostles Peter and Paul,—the representatives, respectively, of formal, and of spiritual, religion. As the result, by way of compromise, of these hostile schools of apostolic teaching, we have the New Testament and the Christian religion.

These are the two main positions of the school of Baur—miracles are incredible, and the Gospels are unhistorical. To the maintenance of these positions, Baur brought great analytical skill, indefatigable industry, accurate and broad scholarship, while his own work has been supplemented by a host of zealous disciples. But the assault may be said already to have spent its force; and as the smoke clears away, four great facts indicate how solidly anchored Christianity is in historical reality.

1. In the first place, the fact has commanded increasing recognition, that the Christian Church existed before a line of the New Testament was written. She had her place in the world, her living and devoted ministry, her lofty message and world-wide mission, her ordinances and worship, her membership and martyrs, before the first parchment of the earliest New Testament books was touched by mortal hands. Her origin cannot therefore be accounted for by a critical analysis of the Gospels and the Epistles. These did not create the faith of the Church, they are only its public confession, and its permanent record. Faith in Christ preceded the first written outline of his life, and it was vigorous enough to create Christian communities in all the great cities of the Roman Empire long before the close of the first century—communities the zeal of whose membership was so

conspicuous and earnest, that no threats or terrors of martyrdom could repress it. These facts are indisputable ; and this sublime primitive faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, whose energy conquered the Roman Empire in little more than two and a half centuries, in spite of Nero and Celsus, in spite of the sword and of the pen, in spite of political and literary hostility, is a rock of adamant on which the critical theory has gone hopelessly to pieces.

2. In the second place, even Baur did not venture to call in question the authenticity of the four great Pauline epistles—Galatians, Romans, First and Second Corinthians. These are confessed to be genuine beyond the shadow of a doubt. They were written within thirty years after the crucifixion. There are in them no interpolations. No subsequent editor has ventured to tamper with them. In them at least, the primitive teaching finds authoritative expression. Baur's wholesale rejection of the other epistles of Paul has not commanded the approval of his disciples. Hilgenfeld admits seven, and Renan nine, to be genuine. But the admission of the genuineness of the four great Pauline epistles involves the credibility of the gospel record, whose salient facts were assumed as universally accepted in the teaching of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

3. In the third place, the conversion of the man who wrote these confessedly genuine epistles, within thirty years after Chrits's death, is a fact with which the new criticism has been unable to deal. Saul of Tarsus has refused to melt away in the crucible of these critical fires. This man, whatever may be said of the other Apostles and of the great body of primitive Christians, had all the training and tastes of a scholar. He was endowed with the highest intellectual gifts, and his conversion proved to be the turning point in the history of Christianity. "It is impossible," says Canon Farrar, "to exaggerate the importance of St. Paul's conversion as one of the evidences of Christianity. That he should have passed, by one flash of conviction, not only from darkness to light, but from one direction of life to the very opposite, is not only characteristic of the man, but evidential of the power and significance of Christianity. Of all who have been converted to the faith of Christ, there is not one in whose case the Christian principle broke so immediately through everything opposed to it, and asserted so absolutely its triumphant superiority. We complain that nearly two thousand years have passed away, and that the brightness of historical events is apt to fade, and even their very outline to be obliterated, as they sink into the 'dark background and abyss of time.' Well, but are we more keen-sighted, more hostile, more eager to disprove the evidence, than the consummate legalist, the admired rabbi, the commissioner of the Sanhedrim, the leading intellect in the schools—learned as Hillel, patriotic as Judas of Gaulon, burning with zeal for the Law as intense as that of Shammai? He was not separated from the events, as we are, by centuries of time. He was not liable to be blinded, as we are, by the dazzling glamour of a victorious Christendom. He had mingled daily with men who had watched from Bethlehem to Golgotha the life of the Crucified, not only with his simple-hearted followers, but with his learned and powerful enemies. The events on which he relied had taken place in the full blaze of contemporary knowledge. He could question living men ; he could analyze existing evidence. He had thousands of means close at hand whereby to test the reality or unreality of the Resurrection in which, up to this time, he had so passionately and contemptuously disbelieved. In accepting this half-crushed and wholly execrated faith, he had everything in the world to lose—he had nothing conceivable to gain ; and yet, in spite of all, overwhelmed by a conviction which he felt to be irresistible, Saul, the Pharisee, became a witness of the Resurrection, a preacher of the Cross." Let me add the acknowledgment of Baur, made shortly before his death in 1860, that "no psychological or dialectical analysis can explore the inner mystery of the act in which God revealed his Son in Paul," and that in "the sudden transformation of Paul from the most violent adversary of Christianity into its most determined herald," he could see "nothing short of a miracle." The confession is fatal to the theory of the great critic. The conversion of Paul is an inexplicable event on any theory that denies the supernatural in Christianity, and that discredits the historical credibility of the gospels.

4. But there is a fourth fact that has confounded the critics, an earlier and greater miracle, to whose reality Paul's conversion and ministry are a living and emphatic testimony, a miracle apart from which the primitive Christian faith and triumph cannot be explained—the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Around the empty grave of our Lord the battle has been fiercest, and the critical defeat has been conspicuous. It could not be denied that the early Christians believed in a risen Christ. That constituted both their message and their in-

spiration. How came they to believe in his resurrection? How came Paul to believe in it? How came they all to believe in it as they did, with such absolute and kindling enthusiasm? Various theories have been propounded, the theories of fraud, of swoon and of vision, but the confession has been extorted that no "psychological analysis can penetrate the inner spiritual process by which in the consciousness of the disciples their unbelief at the death of Jesus was transformed into a belief of his resurrection." And in this confession Baur is followed by Keim, one of the ablest of this critical school, who declares that we must either humbly confess our ignorance, or return to the faith of the Apostles who "have seen the Lord." Thus has the supernatural and historical character of Christianity been critically established; and the result is that the gospels, which were assumed to have been literary forgeries of the second century, have been restored to their place as historical sketches of the life of Jesus Christ. And this is true, even of that gospel, which, more than any other New Testament writing, has been the burning point of this burning controversy, the gospel of John.

As the assumptions of the critical school have been utterly discredited in explaining Christianity, they must prove equally insufficient to account for the religion of the Old Testament. The main positions are these two, and they are the old faces on a new field: 1. Miracles are incredible. 2. The earlier books of the Old Testament are consequently unhistorical, full of legendary tales, of unknown authorship and late date, literary "discoveries," or forgeries of different periods, the resultant of a long conflict between hostile schools of Jewish thought —the priestly and the prophetic—a conflict brought to an end in the victory of the priests under the leadership of Ezra, to whom Moses must yield the authority so long attributed to him. Ezra, not Moses, is the author of the Pentateuch, and the father of the Jewish religion. In him the freedom of the ancient religion was displaced by a cast-iron formalism. It was Ezra, who, under the guidance of Ezekiel's vision, wrought into a compact and complete ceremonial ritual the oral priestly traditions of more than twelve hundred years, and who succeeded in securing its immediate, universal and enthusiastic adoption as of Mosaic origin and authority.

But we have seen that in the criticism of the New Testament, the *first* assumption has broken down. The conversion of Paul, and the resurrection of Christ defy all "psychological and dialectical analysis." They are miracles—evidences of the supernatural in Christian history. The "higher criticism," so-called, is therefore disqualified by its self confessed failure, to reconstruct the Old Testament history on the assumption that a miracle is impossible and incredible. Yet this is the very pith and marrow of the assault.

As to the *second* claim that Ezra, the representative of the priestly class, rather than Moses, is the author of the Old Testament religion, and that the books bearing the great lawgiver's name never existed until after the captivity, several things may already be said: 1. In the first place, the working principle of this theory, according to which the sacred books and institutions of Judaism are the slow growth, and the final precipitate, of conflicting types of tradition,—the priestly and the prophetic—is identical with the working principle of Baur, according to which the Christian books and the Christian Church represent the conflict and the confluence of two hostile types of tradition and thought,—the schools of Peter and of Paul; and that assumption has been proved to be utterly without foundation. A philosophy that has broken down in dealing with events so recent as those of New Testament history, cannot be trusted as a leader in Old Testament interpretation. 2. In the second place, the theory must assume that the Old Testament literature and religion are the product of deliberate and systematic imposture. Hilkiah must have forged the book of Deuteronomy, and Ezra the book of Leviticus, while numerous literary creations and interpolations were added by unknown members of the priestly class. The supposition is so violent that only the amplest evidence can make it credible. 3. It is assumed, in the third place, that the people were so utterly credulous, that they received at Ezra's hands, promptly, without one word of protest, and enthusiastically, a collection of writings, and a religion said to have been of Mosaic origin and authority, utterly unknown to their fathers. There have been instances of superstition, and of successful imposture; but where is there to be found the most distant approach to so stupendous a fraud, so deliberately planned, so immediately successful, so heartily accepted, so reverently transmitted and defended? 4. At the same time, it appears that Hilkiah, Ezra, and their helpers, have done their work so bunglingly, that we, living more than 2000 years later, are able to convict them of the literary forgeries, of which their contemporaries were utterly ignorant, and of which not a hint was given for many cen-

turies afterward. 5. In addition to the improbability of these assumptions, there are two great facts that are indisputable and impregnable. The first of these is the commanding personality of Moses, whose spirit and energy pervade the entire Old Testament dispensation, and are the very iron in the life-blood of Israel, – the man who deliberately turned from the palaces of the Pharaohs to be the champion of a despised and oppressed race. He is for the Old Testament what Paul is for the New, – its mightiest historical figure. No one has ventured to evaporate him into a legend, or to deny him some share at least in the composition of the book of Exodus. The Decalogue is his undoubted work. He who gave to the world those ten commandments could have been no ordinary man. That single chapter stamps him the mightiest of human legislators. There is nothing strained in the late Dean Stanley's comment, "The ten commandments delivered on Mt. Sinai have become imbedded in the heart of the religion which has succeeded. Side by side with the Prayer of our Lord, and with the Creed of his Church, they appear inscribed on our churches, read from our altars, taught to our children, as the foundation of all morality. Hard, stiff, abrupt as the cliffs from which they were taken, they remain as the firm, unyielding basis on which all true spiritual religion has been built and sustained. They represent to us, both in fact and in idea, the granite foundation, the immovable mountain on which the world is built up : without which all theories of religion are but as shifting and fleeting clouds ; they give us the two homely, fundamental laws, which all subsequent revelation has but confirmed and sanctified – the law of our duty toward God, and the law of our duty toward our neighbor." He to whom the world is so deeply indebted, who has carved so deep a place for himself in its moral history could not have been the victim or the disciple of a superstitious faith. He was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as Paul was taught in the schools of Tarsus. He had the training and the tastes of a scholar. He turned his back upon the honors that awaited him at the most imposing royal court of his day, to share the fortunes of a "half-crushed and wholly execrated" race. His deliberate choice, maintained through eighty years of self-denying service, is utterly inexplicable, if Abraham is a legendary being, and Jehovah's covenant with him imaginary and mythical. As the critical theory is completely shattered by the conversion of Paul to Christianity, so it lies broken at the feet of Moses, whose choice is equally significant, whose ministry has been at least equally powerful. The second impregnable fact is, that the Temple existed at least six hundred years before Ezra instituted his reforms ; and hence the Levitical ritual cannot have been of such late origin, nor can the five books of Moses have been unknown at that earlier day. Sooner or later, the defeat that the legendary school of criticism has suffered on New Testament ground, will overtake its champions in their assault on the Law and the Prophets. We stand on historical ground. We have not believed cunningly-devised fables. Better still, these facts of history are of eternal significance ; they convey to us a message of Divine grace and life. These Scriptures are full of good things, and we will not part with them. They have been tried through many generations, and in many lands. Our fathers lived and died in the faith which they nourished. And we have tried them ; therefore will we hold them fast. *Behrends.*

The result of the past struggle is the complete intrenchment of the New Testament behind the bulwarks of historical facts, a better historical conception of the religion of Christ and its history, a vast enrichment of Biblical Theology, and in particular the complete vindication of the Joannine origin of the fourth gospel. The few enfeebled disciples of the once tyrannical school of Baur, such as Volkmar, Holsten and several others, are afraid now even to whisper the strange gospel which but two or three decades ago they and their *confrères* were preaching from the house-tops. The signs are almost daily increasing that the views of the Old Testament critics that have attracted so much attention during the past five to ten years, have also seen their best days, and that the inevitable law of history, that truth will eventually crush falsehood, is undermining their foundation also, saving for the benefit of Christian scholarship that little or least residuum of truth which these views may contain. *Schodde*

O. T. Chronology. Ancient chronology, without the Bible, would be involved in inextricable confusion. Chronological inconsistencies abound in the most authentic historians of antiquity. Sir Isaac Newton, by his study of the scriptures, has detected great errors in the chronology of the ancients. It is only by a rigid adherence to the scriptural standard of dates and eras, as Dr. Hales has well said, that the historical inquirer can hope to avoid the mazes, the deserts, and the quicksands of ancient and primeval chronology. That the scriptural account of times is the fountain and meas-

ure of pagan chronology, has been evinced by Eusebius, Bochart, Melanchthon, Preston, and others. Bochart affirms the derivation of the Chaldean chronology from the sacred annals of the Hebrews. *Wines.*

Chronology is not minutely mapped out in the Bible The order of succession is given without reference always to the scale of time ; the facts themselves, as stated in the book of Genesis, may all be true ; the succession of events there recorded may be also true and correct ; the creation, the temptation and fall, the dispersion, the flood, the after-dispersion and migration of the nations—these all may be true as facts, and yet we may not be able to adjust to them properly a sliding scale of Chronology in respect to years. Yet, in this matter of Chronology, there are internal evidences of truth in this early Hebrew narration, as contrasted with other ancient stories, in these two principles : *First*, the absence of those immense vague periods which precede the historical chronologies of all other people ; the absence of that legendary phase of things which is so marked in the history of the Egyptians and Hindoos. And *secondly*, there is no attempt in this early history to magnify the Jewish people. Every other nation of antiquity sets out to magnify itself as descended from the gods—perhaps as having originated upon the soil it occupies, and, being thus favored of Heaven, as having come down from an immense antiquity.

Now, there is no such endeavor to magnify the Jewish people in this Biblical story. It does not place the beginning of Man in the country destined to be their country, but off in the far East ; and it gives the history of Man as MAN, and with no attempt at self-glorification. All this is significant of the historical in contrast with the mythical style. J. P. T.

As part of the Scripture genealogies is definite and part indefinite, we have no means of determining satisfactorily what is the length of man's history. The consequence is, that, apart altogether from recent geological disquisitions, different dates and periods have been stated and resolutely defended. Usher, Hales, Petavius, Jackson, Poole, and Bunsen have published widely varying results. *W. Fraser.*

The extreme uncertainty attending all attempts to determine the chronology of the Bible, is sufficiently evinced by the fact that one hundred and eighty different calculations have been made by Jewish and Christian authors, of the length of the period between Adam and Christ. The longest of them make it six thousand, nine hundred and eighty-four, and the shortest, three thousand, four hundred and eighty-three years. Under these circumstances, it is very clear that the friends of the Bible have no occasion for uneasiness. If the facts of science or of history should ultimately make it necessary to admit that eight or ten thousand years have elapsed since the creation of man, there is nothing in the Bible in the way of such concession. The Scriptures do not teach us how long men have existed on the earth. Their tables of genealogy were intended to prove that Christ was the Son of David and of the Seed of Abraham, and not how many years have elapsed between the creation and the advent. *C. Hodge.*

Some of the data necessary for harmonizing all the facts of the Old Testament history and chronology we may no longer have ; but this at least may be said, that for each difficulty a credible hypothesis may be, and has been suggested, as, for example, in Hengstenberg's able examination of the objections to the Pentateuch ; in the case of the genealogies ; and the taxing under Cyrenius. In such instances we may favor one or another of the hypotheses ; if one be not correct another may be ; or we may leave the difficulty without solving it, yet also without saying that it cannot be solved. Humility and not arrogance best befits us, where the matter at stake is of such vital moment. And every candid person will allow that the chronology and history of the Old Testament are not involved in any such inextricable confusion as that of the contemporary ancient nations. Moses, on all historical grounds, is more trustworthy than the fragments of Manetho, with their fluctuations between 300 and 500 kings ; the records of India have been in vain ransacked to show a greater antiquity than that of our sacred books ; the 30,000 years of China have been all brought this side of the deluge ; Nineveh was declared a myth, and we are witnessing its resurrection ; no ancient zodiac reaches beyond 747 B.C. ; the hieroglyphs of Egypt have not disproved our venerable documents. While the two Greek historians of Egypt are every day proved more and more untrustworthy, our Scriptures have been constantly receiving fresh increase of evidence to their truthfulness. The sceptical canon, in defiance of all sound rules of testimony, that the Scriptures are to be considered guilty until proved innocent, has been recklessly applied ; and the Scriptures have stood even this hard test. Coleridge concedes that the errors in detail may be reduced to some half score of apparent discrepancies—"a petty breach, or a rat-hole in the walls of the temple."

And over against these difficulties and objections we may put the wonderful congruity of the Scriptures in all other things : their coherent unity, their pervading plan, their matchless morality, their majestic simplicity and simple majesty, their fitness to all times and men, their divine efficacy and life-giving power ; their redemptive economy, their unsurpassed influence ; and in view of these, well ask, what are all such objections in the comparison and contrast? They are at the utmost but as the spots on the sun, as straws floating upon the surface of a stately river which irrigates all the lands through which it passes, and bears upon its bosom innumerable barks freighted with immortal hopes and destinies. Every one of these difficulties might be unsolved, and the main object of the book still secured. Let some points of unimportant and remote chronology and history remain, for which we have no more than a fair hypothesis—what is this, in any candid judgment, in comparison with the broad fact, that for all the problems and questions of man's eternal destiny, the Bible has a definite and an authoritative response? H. B. S.

*Hebrew Chronology—Its more important Points of Divergence.*

By general consent the birth of Christ is made the central point of all sacred chronology, the Christian ages being reckoned forward from that point (A D.) and the Jewish or earlier ages being reckoned backward (B.C.). Going backward from the Christian era, there is general agreement and no reasonable ground for diversity till we reach the period of the *Judges of Israel.* The cardinal points are :

| | B C. |
|---|---|
| The decree of Cyrus for the restoration of the Jews.. ..... ..... | 536 |
| The duration of the captivity, from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, 70 years .... | 606 |
| (But counted from the fall of the city under Zedekiah, 52 years only.) | |
| From the revolt, first year of Rehoboam to the fall of the city, 388 years ..... ... | 976 |
| To the founding of the temple, beginning of Solomon's fourth year, 37 years....1013 | |

This last epoch has chronological importance —the foundation of the temple laid—A.D. 1013.

The first disputed, diversely estimated, point is the *period of the Judges ;* yet the proof texts and authorities cover the period from the Exodus to the temple. Usher makes the period of the Judges 339 years ; Jahn and many others, 450. Usher relies on 1 K. 6 : 1 : "In the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel . . . he began to build the house of the Lord." His computation runs thus : Moses 40 years ; Joshua 40 ; Samuel and Saul 40 ; David (2 Sam. 5 : 4, 5) 41 ; Solomon up to the founding of the temple 3 ; Judges—to fill out 480—339.

The *long period* for the Judges rests primarily on Acts 13 : 20, which states that "after having divided to them the land of Canaan by lot, God gave them judges 450 years until Samuel the prophet." Placing 450 in the above computation in place of 339—an excess of 111 years—we find the date of the Exodus B.C. 1604 instead of Usher's figures A.D. 1491. In support of this long period for the Judges may be urged : (1.) The authority of Paul as above (Acts 13 : 20) which makes this period 450 years. (2.) Josephus makes the interval from the Exodus to the founding of the temple 592 years, and not 480. The Jews of China also make it 592—facts which favor the supposition that the Hebrew text of 1 K. 6 : 1 is in error. It cannot be supposed that either Josephus or the Chinese Jews adjusted their figures to harmonize with Paul. (3.) The internal dates in the Book of Judges demand the long period and cannot be harmonized with the short one. Thus Judges 11 : 26 shows that the Hebrews had then dwelt in Heshbon, Aroer and along the coast of Arnon 300 years. These years lie between the entrance into Canaan and the beginning of Jephthah's judgeship. We have then this computation :

| | YEARS. |
|---|---|
| 300 years, minus 17 years for the term of Joshua, is..... ... .....283 | |
| Add for Jephthah (Judg. 12 : 6) .... ..... | 6 |
| For Ibzan 7 years ; for Elon 10 ; for Abdon 8 (according to Judg. 12 : 8, 11, 14) ..... | 25 |
| Servitude to the Philistines (Judg. 13 : 1)... | 40 |
| Samson (Judg. 15 : 20 and 16 : 31) not less than ..... .... ..... .. | 20 |
| Eli (1 Sam. 4 : 18)..... ..... | 40 |
| A period without dates (narrated Judg. 17–21) estimated at..... | 40 |
| Makes a total of..... ..... | 454 |

It is entirely impossible to bring these internal dates in the history within the short period of 339 years for the Judges. We must therefore accept the long period—450 years—and place the Exodus in 1013+591=B.C. 1604.

The next period of conflicting authorities is the *Sojourn in Egypt.* The issue lies between the long period, 430 years, and the short one, 215 years. The first proof text is Ex. 12 : 40 : "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years." Next is Gen. 15 : 13 ; "Thy seed shall be a stranger in

a land not theirs and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them 400 years :"—which is quoted substantially by Stephen, Ac. 7 : 6. On the other hand stands Gal. 3 : 17, which makes the giving of the law on Sinai 430 years *after* the covenant made with Abraham. The interval from that covenant to Jacob's standing before Pharaoh is readily computed thus : From the covenant with Abram, he being then 75 years old (Gen. 12 : 4) to the birth of Isaac, Abraham 100 years old (Gen. 21 : 5) is 25 years. From birth of Isaac to birth of Jacob (Gen. 25 : 26) 60. Jacob standing before Pharaoh (Gen. 47 : 9) at 130, the sum of which numbers is 215. According to Paul, this would leave for the sojourn in Egypt but 215 years. Reverting now to the obviously conflicting proof-texts above cited, we may note that Ex. 12 : 40 is read variously—the Septuagint (Vatican text) adding after "dwelt in Egypt," the words—"and in the land of Canaan ;" while the Alexandrian text of the Septuagint adds also—"they and their fathers." Both these additions appear also in the Samaritan text and in the Targum Jonathan ; while the Masoretic Hebrew is supported by the more reliable Targum of Onkelos ; also by the Syriac and the Vulgate. These additions as in the Septuagint are clumsily made. The dwelling in Canaan, referring to Abraham and Isaac, should come in *before* the dwelling in Egypt if at all, and not *after*. The diversity between the two texts of the Septuagint is suspicious. The authority of the old Hebrew text stands unshaken. The passage Gen. 15 : 13 is strong to the same purport, since it was "in a land *not his own*" (*i.e.* not Canaan), and was a state of tyrannous oppression which was to continue 400 years—points which forbid us to include in this 400 years the life-history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. As to Paul (Gal. 3 . 17) his readers had before them only the Septuagint ; he would therefore naturally follow its authority, and the more readily because the difference between that and the Hebrew in the length of the interval was a point of no importance to his argument.

The evidence from the lapse of generations during the sojourn in Egypt is of great, not to say decisive, importance to our question. Here, however, opinions as to its bearing differ totally. One of the test passages is Ex. 6 : 16–20, which makes the whole age of Levi 137 years ; of Kohath, his son, 133 ; of Amram—apparently his son and the father of Moses, 137. The age of Moses when he stood before Pharaoh (Ex. 7 : 7) was 80. Kohath was born in Canaan ; his father was older by several years than Benjamin ; presumably, therefore, his children were older ; yet Benjamin had ten sons when he went down into Egypt (Gen. 46 : 21). If we suppose that Kohath was 25 when he went into Egypt, then he lived there 108 years. Amram lived there 137, and Moses at the Exodus had lived 80. With these given generations and ages, this computation is stretched to its utmost extent since it supposes Kohath's death at 133 and Amram's birth to have occurred in the same year ; also Amram's death at 137 and the birth of Moses to be in the same year ; yet the sum is only 325, which is less by 105 years than the long period. With these data the short period (215) might be readily provided for. But several circumstances combine to show that there must be several omitted links between the Amram here spoken of, and Kohath. For in this genealogical list (Ex. 6 : 16–20) we have but two names between Levi, the tribe-father, and Moses, viz. Kohath and Amram. But between Joseph, a younger tribe-father, and Zelophehad, a contemporary of Moses, there are four intervening names (Num. 26 : 28–33) ; between Judah and Bezaleel there are six (1 Chron. 2 : 3–5, 18–20) ; between Joseph (through Ephraim) and Joshua, there are nine (1 Chron. 7 : 22–27). Again, we have in Num. 3 : 27, 28, a census of the four Kohath families. The males, from one month and upward, are 8600. If we set off one fourth of these to Amram (*i.e.* 2150) and remember that the Amram who was father to Moses had but one other son, Aaron, known to this genealogy), with four sons, and that Moses had but two, we shall see it is utterly impossible that the male offspring of Moses and of Aaron could number 2150. Therefore, Amram, the immediate son of Kohath, must have been several generations back of the Amram who was father of Moses. The genealogy of Jochebed, the mother of Moses, might also be explained, but space forbids. The vast increase of Hebrew population, from the 70 souls who went down into Egypt to the 600,000 men of age for war who went out (Ex. 12 : 37), suggests a longer time than 215 years. The evidence on the whole preponderates decisively against the shorter and in favor of the longer period, 430 years. *Cowles.*

[Dr. Cowles next considers in detail the three other doubtful periods : (1) Between Abraham and Terah ; (2) Between the Creation and the Flood ; (3) Between the Flood and the call of Abraham ; and submits his conclusions.]

Reviewing the points made in this examination of Hebrew chronology, it will be seen that we extend the time beyond Usher's system,

(a.) In the period of the Judges at least 111 years ; (b.) In the sojourn in Egypt 215 years ; and (omitting the interval between Terah and Abram as uncertain), (c.) In the interval from the flood to the call of Abram (if the Septuagint be followed) at least 650 years, and perhaps 750 ; and (d.) In the period from the creation to the flood, 606 years—a total of 1582 or 1682 years. Or, to put the case in another form, we put the Exodus in the year (B.C.) 1603 ; Jacob's going into Egypt, B.C. 2033 ; the call of Abram, B.C. 2248 ; and by the Septuagint the flood, 3265 or 3365 ; and finally, by the Septuagint, the creation, B.C. 5527 or 5627.

This approximates toward harmony with the reported results of the Indian chronology which locates the creation B.C. 6174 ; also the Babylonian, B.C. 6158, and the Chinese, B.C. 6157—the excess of the latter above the longest sacred chronology being only 530 years. The approach toward harmony in these three not sacred chronologies—the Indian, the Babylonian and the Chinese—the extreme difference being only 17 years—is certainly a remarkable fact. *Cowles.*

Mr. Poole's discoveries, verified by Mr. Airy's calculations, harmonize with the Septuagint. And on the basis of those discoveries he fixes the date of the Exodus within four years of Dr. Hales's Chronology, and synchronizes all later biblical dates with the Egyptian monuments. Is not a chronology which, determined from independent sources, harmonizes with that of the most ancient translation from the Hebrew Scriptures,—dating from the third century before our era,—which brings into an intelligible form the lists and records of ancient authorities, which meets all the requisitions of known history, and makes the monuments, the moon, and the stars alike witnesses for its accuracy, likely to prove the true chronology of Egypt and of the Bible ? That this chronology carries back the flood a few hundred years no more invalidates the *facts* of Bible history, than the pre-adamic ages of geology invalidate the account of the creation given by Moses. Since biblical chronology is not satisfactorily ascertained from internal evidences, we may well seek to adjust the data of the Bible to a system so well established as this of Mr. Poole. Rightly viewed, his results, as he himself affirms, "vindicate the Bible, showing that the monuments of Egypt in no manner, on no point, contradict that sacred book, but confirm it." J. P. T.

To the question, whether the Bible is explicitly committed to a short system of chronology for the human race, we think that an unprejudiced examination must answer in the negative.

It should be remembered that the chronological figures in the margins of our reference Bibles were not prepared by an inspired writer, but by Archbishop Usher, whose chronological scheme has by no means a clear field, but is one of nearly two hundred schemes drawn up from the fragmentary data of the Bible. It is easily seen, even in some of the most formal genealogies of the Bible, that the main object of the writer was not to furnish a complete and accurate chronology, but rather to indicate lines of descent and facts of relationship. For example, in the genealogy of Christ as given in Matt. 1 : 1–17, the writer doubtless knew that many links were omitted ; as where it is said that "Joram begat Ozias" (verse 8) ; whereas, if every link had been given according to 1 Chron. 3 : 11, 12, it would have read "Joram begat Ahaziah, Ahaziah begat Joash, Joash begat Amaziah, and Amaziah begat Ozias." A still more instructive case occurs in Ezra, where Azariah is called the "son of Meraioth," and this in a genealogical table ; whereas, according to 1 Chron. 6 : 7–11, Azariah was the sixth generation from Meraioth. Again, in 1 Chron. 26 : 24, we read : "Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures." This was in David's time, several hundred years after Moses. Yet Gershom was the son of Moses, while Shebuel was twelve or fifteen generations from the person whose son he is said to be ; and this the writer, and those for whom he wrote, must have known.

From this it is plain that the Jews, like other oriental nations, introduced their genealogical tables not so much to furnish an accurate chronology in years as to emphasize the fact of lineal descent and consanguinity ; so that we even find it said in Gen. 10 : 15–18 that Canaan begat not only two individuals that are mentioned, but also nine tribes or nations which are specified ! Such are the indefinite materials from which the so-called systems of biblical chronology are made out. From which it is clear that chronology was not one of the things which the Bible set out to teach, but that the sacred writers have left the subject so open that it will be very difficult for archæologists to come into collision with the general chronological statements of the Scripture. G. F. W.

It requires no great scholarship to satisfy ourselves that the computation of the date of Adam, as made from the received Hebrew, or the Septuagint or Peschito versions, will differ by many centuries ; that the figures in Genesis 5 have been tampered with in early days ; that genealogies even in the New Testament are pur-

posely curtailed ; that one man is sometimes said to be the son of another, though elsewhere it appears that many generations have intervened between them ; and that the genealogical lists after the flood refer, partially at least, to the descent, not of individuals, but of nations, one nation being said to have begotten other nations. As, therefore, it is evident that these lists of names are intended to indicate only the line of descent, and not every step on the road, as they have suffered in transmission, and as we cannot always in the earlier records distinguish between nations and individuals, we need not consider ourselves bound to any chronology deduced from them. *J. H. Gladstone.*

There are two main sources of difficulty in determining the true chronology of Old Testament events. One is the use of letters for figures from the earliest times ; the other the application of the term "son" to descendants of later generations. Letters, so like as are many of the Hebrew alphabet, might easily lead to errors on the part of copyists in the numerous manuscripts written through thousands of years. B.

Inspiration does not guarantee the infallibility of copyists, and it is undeniable that many seeming inconsistencies may be traced to the carelessness of scribes. Many of the much-talked-of discrepancies between the books of Kings and Chronicles, as well as a few of those presented in the New Testament, are at once accounted for in that way ; for the slightest change in a letter or a word, such as a weary transcriber after a long day's work would be very liable to make, accounts for the disagreement, and the emendation being made, harmony is at once restored. This is especially the case in those statements in the Old Testament which relate to numbers ; for as in the Hebrew language there were no numerals, but the letters of the alphabet were made to do duty for figures, and as some of these letters differ from others only by the merest hair-stroke, it is easy to see how in the process of transcription errors have crept in. W. M. T.

May we not regard it as highly probable that the numbers in the three versions, Hebrew, Samaritan, and Septuagint, have suffered corruption, and that the real space between the Deluge and the Call of Abraham exceeded even the Septuagint estimate ? If the Flood is placed about B.C. 3600, there will be ample time for the production of such a state of society and such a condition of the arts as we find to have existed in Egypt a thousand years later, as well as for the changes of physical type and language which are noted by the ethnologist. The geologist may add on 2000 years more for the interval between the Deluge and the Creation, and may perhaps find room therein for his "palæolithic" and his "neolithic" periods. G. R.

The principal advocates of the Long Chronology are Jackson, Hales, and Des-Vignoles. They take the LXX. for the patriarchal generations, and adopt the long interval from the Exodus to the Foundation of Solomon's Temple. The Short Chronology, from Jerome's time the recognized system of the West, has had a multitude of illustrious supporters (Usher, Newton, Petavius, Michaelis, Gesenius, Stuart, Clinton, etc.), and is adopted in the margin of the A. V. Usher may be considered as its most able advocate. He follows the Hebrew in the patriarchal generations, and takes the 480 years from the Exodus to the Foundation of Solomon's Temple. The Rabbinical Chronology, partially received, chiefly by the German school, accepts the biblical numbers, but makes the most arbitrary corrections.

| | Hales. | Jackson. | Usher. | Petavius. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B.C. | B.C. | B.C. | B.C. |
| Creation | 5411 | 5426 | 4004 | 3983 |
| Flood | 3155 | 3170 | 2348 | 2327 |
| Abram leaves Haran | 2078 | 2023 | 1921 | 1961 |
| Exodus | 1648 | 1593 | 1491 | 1531 |
| Foundation of Solomon's Temple | 1027 | 1014 | 1012 | 1012 |
| Destruction of Solomon's Temple | 586 | 586 | 588 | 589 |

*Dic. B.*

### *Assyrian Discovery.*

The product of each new source of knowledge is apprehended only by slow degrees. A long time is needed to exhaust it. Patient thought is needed to set it in its right relations with the stock of truth already on hand. Scientific advance is through guesses—more or less rash—destined often to ephemeral life, and marking only the approximations of the mind to sound and accurate learning. No department of science can make real progress without constant and searching criticism, in order that zeal may not outrun knowledge, nor brilliant conjecture do duty as secure fact. But when the matter of research is closely related to our sacred documents, where truth is most needful, and mistake most disastrous, then such criticism, both calm and intrepid, is demanded with especial emphasis. And it is from this standpoint that it ought to be profitable to survey the great subject of ASSYRIAN DISCOVERY. The cuneiform inscriptions

do not explain all the things that need explanation, from Genesis to Malachi, and they introduce grave problems of their own. But it is, for all that, largely by their aid, supplemented by modern discoveries in other archæological fields, that the inquiries about ancient peoples, which the eager mind of our day is putting so restlessly, can receive answers that begin to satisfy. We are coming, by degrees, to a time when we may construct a full and accurate history of those lands and those centuries which saw the growth, the development, the proud culmination, the ruin, and the partial recovery of the Hebrew national life. Our interest in that life is unique. It was the life which preserved to the world the knowledge of the Lord of lords ; the life of the people to whom the law was given, and the promises were intrusted, and the prophets spoke, and the special deliverances of God were vouchsafed, that from their midst might spring the Deliverer of all men.

Assyria has not spoken her last word to men, and probably will not in our day ; Egypt is full of voices, only half interpreted ; the Hittites, who once defied Assyria, and marched out to fight Egypt with undaunted front, have hardly yet begun to speak again, after a long stillness. Other words beside, uttered ages ago, but not yet audible to modern ears, may be on their way to us, out of the remote distance of the centuries. It is for us to catch these messages and understand them, that we may fit them into the great fabric of apprehended and acknowledged truth, to the enrichment of ourselves, and those who shall be reached by our ministry, and to the glory of our common Lord. *F. Brown.*

The study of Assyrian now reposes on as sure and certain a basis as the study of any ancient language, a knowledge of which has been traditionally handed down to us ; and the antiquity of its monuments, the copiousness of its vocabulary, the perfection of its grammar, and the syllabic character of the writing—which expresses vowels as well as consonants—all combine to make it of the highest importance for the study of the Semitic languages. Its recovery has not only shed a flood of light on the history and antiquities of the Old Testament, it has served to illustrate and explain the language of the Old Testament as well. *Sayce.*

The advantages which Assyriology offers to the student of the Bible are very great.

(1.) In the first place, Assyriology has given to the ancient Hebrew literature and life a *new setting.* Whenever we learn to know a people in its racial connections, then we are beginning to *know* it, then it begins to take its rightful place among the peoples of the earth, then the fibres of human sympathy begin to reach out on this side and that, there are points of contact, there are lines of interest ; we can estimate its whole character more wisely when we learn, even imperfectly, its genesis and its relationships ; what it has accomplished in the world takes on a new aspect, either by resemblance or by contrast, when put by the side of the doings of its sister people ; the forms of its thought become more intelligible, or more striking ; the quality of its literature receives some explanation, and the external features of that literature cease to be solitary and strange to us ; the people and all that belongs to it come more fully into our world, and range themselves alongside of us and our neighbors and our ancestors, and take on a familiarity which is yet new and fresh, and full of meaning. It is a distinct and great advantage, when, without any lowering of its unique claims, or any diminution of the special characteristics imparted to it by the divine agency in its production, the volume of sacred writings, before whose authority we bow, associates itself more intimately, on its human side, with the history of mankind at large. Nothing has done so much to establish these connections as the inscriptions of Babylonia and Assyria.

(2) Assyriology brings into clear light the *essential difference* between the Hebrews and other ancient peoples. The thing which every earnest Bible scholar is most concerned for is that root-element which *distinguishes* the Hebrew people from all other ancient peoples, and the Hebrew writings from all other ancient literatures. The one great distinctive feature of the literary monuments of the Hebrews is that they were informed by a spirit to which the inscriptions of Nineveh and Babylon are utter strangers. There is a truth of spiritual conception, a loftiness of spiritual tone, a conviction of unseen realities, a confident reliance upon an invisible but all-controlling power, a humble worship in the presence of the supreme majesty, a peace in union and communion with the one and only God, and the vigorous germs of an ethics reflecting his will, which make an infinite gap between the Hebrew and his brother Shemite "beyond the river," that all likeness of literary form does not begin to span.

(3.) In thinking of the uses of Assyriology in Old Testament study, our minds turn most readily to the positive historical confirmations and explanations which have been awakened by the blow of the excavator's pick, and risen up before us out of the ground. And in this as-

pect of it Assyriology is a mine of wealth. It proves, speaking broadly, and leaving out of account for the time the occasional difficulties which it presents, that among the nations of antiquity, whose literary remains have come down to us, the Hebrews were the only outsiders who really knew much about the great Asiatic empires. The stamp of honesty and competency is thus put upon their historical documents, if they needed it. The Egyptians were too far away, and came too seldom into any relations with Babylon and Nineveh, to be of first-rate value as witnesses to their deeds. The Hebrews, with their nearer position, and more frequent and memorable contact, had also a conscientiousness and skill in annalistic writing which make their evidence in regard to the history of their neighbors important and trustworthy, though, of course, disconnected. The inscriptions which show us this, give us thereby a new ground of confidence in Hebrew history as a whole. *F. Brown.*

It is noteworthy how these researches are affecting the old authorities. Herodotus, Manetho, Ctesias, and most early writers suffer greatly by the contact ; Berosus less, though we know him but in fragments. The only ancient historical authority that walks in safety down the centuries by the side of all these unexpected disclosures, and is constantly becoming vindicated from hostile criticism, is the sacred Scriptures. While, in all this vast range of research, very few authenticated facts seem to conflict with those frank narratives, many a new discovery is coming to their confirmation. The old Table of the nations (Genesis 10) acquires fresh interest and value. A land of Cush (Genesis 2 : 13), long remanded to Africa alone, is found in Western Asia. The land of Shinar reappears in old Sumir, with its burned "bricks for stone" and its "pitch for mortar." The life and times of Abraham fall into their proper setting, both in Assyria and in Egypt. The marauding monarchs of the East put in an appearance, and Arioch (Eriaku) dwells in Ellasar or Larsa. Belshazzar also, long lost and even denied to history, comes forth from a buried inscription, and Cyrus declares the capture of Babylon, "without fighting," to have been made on just such a riotous feast-day as the Scripture describes. The whole book of Daniel, notwithstanding one or two remaining difficulties, is found to be so suffused with Babylonian life, customs and institutions as to make it entirely impracticable, says Dr. W. H. Ward, to bring down the date, as has been attempted, three hundred years. And whereas the book of Judith is thus revealed a sheer invention, the book of Daniel, on its historic side, stands firmer than ever. In Egypt, where Herodotus is found wanting, Genesis steadily gains new confirmation. Von Bohlen, who assailed its historic accuracy fifty years ago, was extinguished in the encounter. And Mr. R. S. Poole has not hesitated to assert that the effort to reduce the date of these narratives many hundred years is wholly incompatible with their minute conformity to all the circumstances of the age of the Ramessides, and that the late Egyptian discoveries "emphatically call for a reconsideration" of that position. The excavation in the earth will undermine the castle in the air. S. C. B.

It is inconceivable, that if the Biblical history, covering the space of time and dealing as it does with the affairs of most of the great nations of antiquity, were a fictitious narrative, modern historical science, with its searching methods and its exact and extended knowledge of the past, should not long ere this have demonstrated the fact, and completely overthrown the historical authority of the sacred volume. But it is not even pretended that this has been done. As the stores of antique lore have been unlocked, and our acquaintance with the ancient world has increased in extent, precision, and accuracy, it has become more and more apparent that such a confutation of the historical character of the sacred records is impossible. G. R.

As emphasizing the immense advance made in archæological discovery during the last half century the following paragraph from the Bib. Repository, 1841, is cited. B.

"It is much to be lamented that all the ancient archives of Nineveh and Babylon and Tyre and Thebes and Memphis have perished. For, that they once possessed very ample histories and annals, we have abundant testimony. Their loss is but poorly supplied by the comparatively modern Greek and Jewish historians, or by the Christian fathers. It is to the Bible chiefly, that we must have recourse for information relative to all that vast period which elapsed anterior to the time at which Herodotus commences his elaborate and interesting history." *Dr. P. Lindsley.*

# Section 9.

## THE PENTATEUCH:

STRUCTURE ; EVIDENCES ; MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP.

THE Pentateuch is the Greek name given to the five books, commonly called the Five Books of Moses. In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah it was called "the Law of Moses," or "the Book of the Law of Moses," or simply "the Book of Moses." This was beyond all reasonable doubt our existing Pentateuch. The book which was discovered in the Temple in the reign of Josiah, and which is entitled "the Book of the Law of Jehovah by the hand of Moses," was substantially, it would seem, the same volume, though it may afterward have undergone some revision by Ezra. The present Jews usually call the whole by the name of *Torah*, *i.e.*, "the Law," or *Torath Mosheh*, "the Law of Moses." The division of the whole work into five parts was probably made by the Greek translators, for the titles of the several books are not of Hebrew but of Greek origin. The Hebrew names are merely taken from the first words of each book, and in the first instance only designated particular *sections*, and not whole books. The MSS. of the Pentateuch form a single roll or volume, and are divided, not into books, but into larger and smaller sections, called *Pershiyoth* and *Sedarim*. P. S.

The Pentateuch has the air and manner of history ; the Jews have always regarded it in that light ; and modern historical, geographical, and archæological inquiries are found to bear witness to its truth. Internally, the narrative is consistent with itself ; externally, it is supported by all that has any claim to be considered sober earnest in the histories of other nations. G. R.

The five books of the PENTATEUCH form a consecutive whole : they are not merely a collection of ancient fragments loosely strung together, but a well-digested and connected composition. The great subject of this history is the establishment of the Theocracy. Its central point is the giving of the Law on Sinai, and the solemn covenant there ratified, whereby the Jewish nation was constituted "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to Jehovah." The book of Genesis (with the first chapters of Exodus) describes the steps which led to the establishment of the Theocracy. Abraham is the father of the Jewish *nation ;* to Abraham the *Land* of Canaan is first given in promise. It is a part of the writer's plan to tell us what the Divine preparation of the world was, in order to show, first, the significance of the call of Abraham, and next, the true nature of the Jewish theocracy. He begins with the CREATION of the world, because the GOD who created the world and the God who revealed himself to the fathers is the same God. The book of Genesis has thus a character at once special and universal. It embraces the world ; it speaks of God as the God of the whole human race. Its design is to show how God revealed himself to the first fathers of the Jewish race, that he might make to himself a nation who should be his witnesses in the midst of the earth. Five principal persons are the pillars, so to speak, on which the whole superstructure rests, ADAM, NOAH, ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB. A specific plan is preserved throughout. The main purpose is never forgotten. God's relation to Israel holds the first place in the writer's mind. It is this which it is his object to convey. The history of that chosen seed, who were the heirs of the promise and the guardians of the Divine oracles, is the only history which interprets man's relation to God. By its light all others shine, and may be read when the time shall come. *Dic. B.*

The primary object of the Pentateuch, both in its record of primeval and patriarchal experience, and in its detailed recital of the constitution and laws conferred upon the Israelitish community, was to furnish the groundwork of a revelation of God, embracing every point of view in which to infinite Wisdom it appeared desirable for the Creator and Governor of the universe to manifest himself to creatures made capable of knowing him. However diversified its contents, this grand aim of the record is never lost sight of ; and that object is effected by making it simultaneously a revelation of man himself, and whose character is to be learned, not so much from abstract statements as from an infallible narrative of his acts and utterances ; particularly when taken in connection with the Divine requirements expressed in the law, and with the provision graciously made for his varied necessities. D. M.——These earlier books give rather the history of a revelation than the revelation itself ; and both the history and the revelation are imperfect. Much must

have been told and enjoined of which no record is given in Scripture. In Eden, man must have known much more of God and of duty than is set forth in Genesis. There must have been a law defining right and wrong before the Decalogue. We read of men calling on the name of the Lord (Gen. 4) long before we learn that they were taught to pray. They offered sacrifices, both of thanksgiving and of expiation, centuries before there is any record of a Divine command in relation to either. Nor is this true of positive institutions only. There seem to have been prophecies of a future judgment addressed to the antediluvians ; but we read of them only in the Epistle of Jude. There we learn for the first time how Enoch foretold that the Lord was to come with tens of thousands of his holy ones, and was to execute judgment on the ungodly for their deeds of ungodliness. We have no intimation, it is sometimes said, in the earlier books of the Bible, of a future life. The rewards of the Jewish economy belong to the present life, and none of them to the next. Hence, it is added, the Jews had no knowledge of such a life, which is " brought to light " only by the gospel. But this view is a mistake, both in fact and in the principle of interpretation on which it rests. The Jews must have known as much, at least, as the Egyptians, as the Buddhist, the Brahmin, the American Indian. The language of the Psalms, and the comments of the New Testament on Abraham, on Moses, on the worthies of Hebrews 11, all show that those men sought a home on the other side of the grave, and believed in a city, not of tents, but with foundations at once steadfast and lasting. The Pentateuch may not tell us how or when that life was revealed, nor point to that life as the reward of obedience to the law ; but it was an object of faith and hope, and must therefore have been the theme of a divine intimation—given either through man's nature or by an actual announcement. *Angus.*

The Pentateuch in its statements is marked by a perfect *simplicity and sobriety.* In its narrative it contains not a word of embellishment, of exaggeration, or of depreciation. It casts over all its facts a pure " dry light." It records events without comments. It supports no theories and takes no sides. A severe simplicity governs the style as well as the statements. The natural and the superhuman events are recorded in the same quiet way. It consistently pursues a *definite historic end.* It opens the record of God's dealings with man, and of the facts adjacent ; God's communications, the human channels of his mercies, and the reception which they met. It has the severe and unmistakable tone of a great utterance to and for sinning man. To its great historic end everything is subordinated. The narrative of the Pentateuch is pre-eminently *true to human nature,* both in its regenerate and its unregenerate condition. Even such sublime faith as that of Abraham and of Noah, in kind if not in degree, the world has long since been forced to recognize as a fact. The attendant human weakness, whereby an Abraham could timidly equivocate and a Noah become intoxicated, the church in every age has sadly learned to be also true to life. They are real characters, not ideal creations. And, fearless and impartial in its tone, the Pentateuch does not pause to *apologize* or *explain.* Sometimes when a word would have precluded a cavil, that word is withheld. The Pentateuch thus carries, in the strongest form, every mark of a veritable history. S. C. B.

*The Pentateuch contemporaneous with the Law.* Through a period of over a thousand years (back from the time of Christ) we have notices of a work containing the Laws which governed the Jews. We find that the various *names* by which it is called, beginning with the New Testament, in all the works which have come down to our time, are repeated in an unbroken series back to the time of Joshua. " The Law," " The Law of Moses," " The Law of the Lord," " The Book of the Law by the hand of Moses," " The Book of the Law of the Lord," are used as names to designate the Pentateuch from the days of Paul to the days of Joshua. And further, the *passages which are quoted* by all this series of writers from the book referred to under these names are contained in the Pentateuch, and are often quoted with verbal exactness, even when the language is peculiar. Still further, *peculiar words and phrases* are used frequently in all these writings, obviously taken from " The Law," showing that it was a book whose contents were familiar to these writers. The whole atmosphere of these books is fragrant with the incense which rose from the Law, and the whole elaborate, magnificent ritual of the nation found imbedded in it. Our Pentateuch must have existed in their day, or all historical evidence is false and worthless. *Stebbins.*

The New Testament is *historically* a continuation of the scheme of which the Pentateuch is the commencement. It also purports to be *doctrinally* the development of the older dispensation ; the realization of its types, and the fulfilment of its promises and prophecies. Even the historical narratives of the Pentateuch are made to assume in the New Testament a doc-

trinal connection with the Gospel. Thus the account of the creation has its parallel and complement in the New Testament intimations of a "new creation." The deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in order to their entering into covenant with God and their occupancy of the land of promise, with all the correlative institutions, as priesthood, sacrifice, etc., are all represented by New Testament writers as having their counterparts in a higher and spiritual form in the Christian economy. D. M.

The following points are so firmly established that no criticism can ever overthrow them. 1. That the Pentateuch in its present form is *canonical* and *theopneustic*, composed, arranged, and incorporated in the codex of the Sacred Scriptures of the Ancient Covenant with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit. 2. That it is *authentic:* so far as its *Divine* origin is concerned, authentic because it is canonical ; and so far as its *human* origin is concerned, authentic and *Mosaic*, because even though everything contained in it may not have been written by the pen of Moses himself, yet the composition of all the rest and the arrangement of the whole was completed within the circle of his assistants, pupils, and contemporaries, and to a great extent was certainly performed under his supervision and by his direction. 3. Even if the separate portions of the Pentateuch are not all the production of one and the same pen, they form one complete work, and the whole is *uniform*, well-planned, well-arranged, and harmonious. 4. The Pentateuch in its present form constituted the *foundation* of the Israelitish history, whether civil, religious, moral, ceremonial, or even literary. It is a historical fact, better established than any other in antiquarian research, that the Pentateuch is the basis and the necessary preliminary of all Old Testament history and literature, both of which—and with them Christianity as their fruit and perfection—would resemble a tree without roots, a river without a source, or a building which, instead of resting on a firm foundation, was suspended in the air, if the composition of the Pentateuch were relegated to a later period in Jewish history. The references to the Pentateuch occurring in the history and literature of the Old Testament are so numerous and comprehensive, and they bear on so many different points, that we maintain that its five books, and all the portions of which it is at present made up, is the basis and the necessary antecedent of the history of the Jewish people, commonwealth, religion, manners, and literature. The existence of the nation of Israel, whether looked at on its brighter or its darker side—in its prosperity, in its fall and restoration, in its peculiar and unparalleled forms of development, in its religious views, its political institutions, its ceremonial arrangements, its literary productions, etc. (all of them things in which it stood quite alone in the ancient world)—the Israelitish nation, we say, in all these respects, is utterly incomprehensible, except as the Law of Moses constituted the groundwork of its entire history. K.

There is not the slightest hint in the historical books that the laws found in the Pentateuch were *enacted or revised in any later time* than that of the Mosaic age. It professes to contain only those laws and rites which were prescribed by Moses. There is not a particle of reliable evidence, either external or internal, that a single law recorded in the Pentateuch was the work of the period subsequent to the time of Moses. New laws are given, new regulations are established on the banks of the Jordan, such as the changed condition of the people would require, after they had passed over and taken possession of the promised land. No fundamental laws were made afterward of which we have any record. All appeals are made to the law of Moses. The *style* and *language* of the Pentateuch, its peculiar phrases and "archaic words," shows that it must have been written some centuries before any other of the extant Hebrew writings, thus remitting its composition to several generations before the time of David. Governed by its language we must date the Pentateuch as early as the Mosaic Age. The *contents* of the Pentateuch, the journal-like arrangement of its events and laws, the constant assumption or implication that it was written in a camp and many of its laws adapted only to camp life, the amendments of laws when on the borders of the promised land to fit them to the changed condition and wants of the people, the inventories of gifts, the record of specifications for materials and work for sacred use, the story of incidents which caused new laws to be enacted or old ones amended, the obviously undesigned coincidences of events separated by many chapters and much time, confirm the previous historic and linguistic evidence of the composition of the Pentateuch in the Mosaic age, and prove its direct or indirect Mosaic authorship. *Stebbins.*

In all the Old Testament books we have innumerable references to the facts contained in the Pentateuch ; references made by many different writers, in many different ages. Hence the Israelitish nation must have had, from the origin of their commonwealth, a great, stand-

ing, and authoritative record of these facts ; and this record must have been the Pentateuch itself. For, if there had been no such history to serve as the common guide of all these authors, it must have been morally impossible for them, in such a vast number of allusions and quotations, and these extending to such a multitude of minute details, to avoid innumerable inconsistencies with each other. Can we believe that the wit of man is equal to the task of framing a fictitious history, in which all these manifold references, citations, and rehearsals, dispersed through the works of so many authors, writing for so many different objects, and in so many different styles and ages, should be introduced and harmonized without a single jar, and with such an air of verisimilitude and originality, that all the world should mistake the fabrication as the common fountain and source of the very books, out of which it was formed? Consider! "All these multiplied and various compositions unite in presupposing the existence and the truth of the Pentateuch, and uniformly refer to and quote it as the only true and genuine account of the ancient history and known laws of the Jews. They recite its facts ; they refer to its laws ; they celebrate its author ; they appeal to the people, to the kings, to the priests ; they rebuke and threaten them for neglecting the law of Moses, as contained in the Pentateuch ; and, what is most decisive, they never once give the least hint of any rival law, of any new compilation, of any doubt as to its authenticity." (*Graves.*)

Of the *external* historical proofs of the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch, *the sum is this.* The evidence for the existence of this writing all along down from the return of the Jews out of captivity to the present time is so strong that none dispute it. At this point we enter upon debated territory. Yet the Pentateuch could not have been compiled at this time, but must have been the same writing which the Jews received as the law of Moses before the captivity, because it was evidently well known both to Jews and heathen during the captivity ; because the law enforced by Ezra required sacrifices of the people, to which they would never have submitted but in obedience to a code of established and unquestionable authority ; because many persons, who were present at the laying of the foundation of the second temple, had seen the first, and must have known the law then in use, and therefore could and would have detected and exposed a fabricated code ; because three distinct copies of the writing can be traced,—one brought by the returned Jews (Hag. 2 : 11), a second carried by Ezra (7 : 14, 25) and a third taken by Nehemiah (1 : 7–9)—manifestly not borrowed from each other, yet all agreeing in their statements ; and because the Samaritans, the bitter enemies of the Jews, as well before as after the captivity, acknowledged it as of divine origin and authority. Again, our copy of the Pentateuch must have existed prior to the division of the tribes into the separate kingdoms of Israel and Judah, because the monarchs and people of the former, not less than those of the latter, owned its authority as the code of the whole Jewish race before that event, notwithstanding it was repugnant to their interests as an independent state, and interposed the greatest obstacle to the peculiar policy adopted from the first and steadily pursued to the end by the Israelitish kings. Further, the Pentateuch, as we have it, must have preceded the establishment of monarchy among the Hebrews, because it not only does not exhibit a regal form of government, but expressly opposes that description of polity, noticing it as an innovation that would arise in the progress of ages, and seeking, by various admirable enactments, to counteract its innate tendencies to despotism and tyranny. And further still, this venerable writing must be coeval with the origin of the Hebrew state, because, during the interval which elapsed between the first formation of the government and the establishment of monarchy, no change was made in the form of polity, no occasion arose for fabricating a code, no conceivable interest could be promoted by such a procedure, and no man or body of men appear to have possessed an influence sufficiently commanding to give currency to the imposition. Superadded to all these considerations is the still more forcible fact, that a long catalogue of Jewish writers, stretching from the age of Moses himself down to the birth of Christ, have acknowledged and cited the Pentateuch, in every possible form of acknowledgment and citation, as the true and authentic history and code of their nation ; and that, among the many disputes and differences of opinion which the Jews have had about the Mosaic law, there never was any such dispute or difference as this, whether Moses was the author of the writing, or whether it contained a credible account of the foundation and early annals of their state ; even the Sadducees, learned men and free-thinkers, who rejected all the other books held sacred by their countrymen, acknowledging the Pentateuch as genuine and divine. The world may be challenged to produce a chain of evidence, of equal strength,

in support of the genuineness and authenticity of any other ancient writing. E. C. W.

The essential and systematic unity of the present Pentateuch as a composition is affirmed by such analysts as Ewald, Tuch, Knobel, Hupfeld, in the strongest terms, and is too obvious to be disputed. S. C. B.——That there is a unity of design in the Pentateuch which can only be explained on the supposition of a single author, who must have been Moses, is the ground taken by Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Drechsler, Ranke, Welte, Keil, Professor Douglas, Professor Bartlett. *Dic. B.*

*Mosaic Authorship.* A literary work exhibiting such marks of connection and order it is natural to ascribe to one author. Moses was a man of learning (Acts 7 : 22), a writer (Exod. 17 : 14 ; 24, : 4), a poet (Exod. 15 ; Deut. 32), a law-giver, and a public leader. He was also a witness and a chief mover in all the events recounted from the second chapter of Exodus to the last of Deuteronomy. It is therefore antecedently most probable that he was the author of the Pentateuch. Apart from the few passages which have the appearance of a later date, the work remains still a perfect whole from the beginning to the death of Moses, *when it closes.* It is also expressly affirmed in the book itself that Moses wrote certain parts of it, if not the whole (Ex. 17 : 14 ; 24 : 4 ; Nu. 33 : 2 ; De. 31 : 9, 22, 24–26). Hence the probability is, that the whole work, being complete in itself, is the production of him to whom great part of it is by itself ascribed. As the whole book is also the first part of a progressive work, to be continued for many ages, it is natural that certain explanatory notes may have been inserted by the direction of the Divine Author. As Moses may have elucidated the documents that came down to him by a few verbal changes and additions, so may his continuator have added a few notes of explanation to his finished work for the benefit of a later generation. This probability is turned into an established certainty, by testimony of the most satisfactory kind, as soon as we go beyond the work itself into the succeeding portions of Sacred Scripture. In the very first chapter of the book of Joshua we read of the book of the law, which is plainly ascribed to Moses (vs. 7, 8). Other references to the book of the law by Moses are found in subsequent passages of Joshua (8 : 31–34 ; 33 : 6 ; 24 : 26). Similar testimonies are extant in the following books : Jud. 3 : 1–4 ; 1 K. 2 : 2, 3 ; 8 : 53 ; 2 K. 18 : 4 ; 23 : 25 ; 2 Ch. 25 : 4 ; 34 : 14 ; 35 : 12 ; Ez. 6 : 18 ; Neh. 8 : 1 ; 13 : 1. Our Lord after his resurrection said, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written *in the law of Moses*, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." It is only needful to say that the law of Moses here means the Pentateuch, and that this passage is only a single sample out of the concurrent testimony of the New Testament to the Mosaic authorship of this book. M.

The claim of Moses to the authorship of the Pentateuch was a matter of universal tradition, and never called in question either by Jews or Christians, for at least three thousand years after its publication, till Thomas Hobbes of England, about A.D. 1650, advanced the bold hypothesis that the first five books of the Bible were called the books of Moses, not because he wrote them, but because they relate to transactions in which he acted a prominent part. Subsequent to the time of Hobbes, the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch has been assailed by a multitude of learned men, among whom the most distinguished are Spinoza, Simon, Leclerc, Volney, Hasse, Nachtigall, Vater, Bertholdt, De Wette, and Gesenius.

The five books of Moses are written in pure Hebrew, with some diversity of style, such as naturally springs from the diversity of the subjects of which it treats ; but throughout with the utmost simplicity, combined with an admirable force and vividness of expression. Of their inspiration and canonical authority no doubt has ever been entertained by the Church. Moses conversed with God "face to face, as man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex. 33 : 11) ; he was privileged to address God at all times (Ex. 25 : 22 ; Num. 7 : 89 ; 9 : 8), and was invested with the power of working miracles (Ex. 8 : 19), *et al.* He affirms that what he delivered was by the command, and at the suggestion of the Almighty ; and the sacred writers of the New Testament uniformly acknowledge the inspired authority and divine legation of Moses. The Pentateuch, immediately after its composition, was deposited by the ark in the tabernacle (Deut. 31 : 26) ; it was read every Sabbath day in the synagogues (Luke 4 : 16 ; Acts 13 : 15, 27 ; 15 : 21), and in the most solemn manner every seventh year (Deut. 31 : 10), et seq.; the supreme ruler in Israel was obliged to copy it (Deut. 17 : 18, 19 ; 27 : 3) ; the people were commanded to teach it diligently to their children (Lev. 10 : 11 ; Deut. 6 : 6–9), and it was preserved by the Israelites with the most vigilant care, as the divine record of their civil and religious polity. Its being thus guarded as a sacred deposit, is the surest guarantee that it

has descended to us in a general uncorrupted purity. *Bush.*

Every fresh examination of the topography and geography of places described or alluded to in the Pentateuch, shows that the writer had that exact local information which could proceed only from personal observation. "The Old Testament," says Legh, "is beyond all comparison the most interesting and instructive guide of which a traveller in the East can avail himself." "Wherever any fact is mentioned in the Bible history," says Wilkinson, "we do not discover anything on the monuments which tends to contradict it." These and similar facts have led such unprejudiced historians and writers as Ritter, Heeren, Leo, Schlösser, Luden, Ideler, Wachler, and others, to recognize the books of Moses as authentic history. The principal facts of the Pentateuch are acknowledged by Heeren, in his "History of Antiquity," to be historically established. John von Müller says of the tenth chapter of Genesis, that "the data are, geographically, altogether true. From this chapter universal history ought to begin." "The record of God's miraculous Providence," says Luden, in his "History of Antiquity," "in regard to the Israelites, *the oldest monument of written history*, did not preserve the people faithful toward God." "We have come to the decided conviction," remarks Leo, "after examining what has been lately written on this subject, that the essential parts of the law, as well as a great portion of the historical accounts, which form the groundwork of the Pentateuch, and cannot be entirely separated from the laws, as they show their import and design, were written by Moses himself, and that the collecting the whole into one body, if not done by Moses himself, certainly took place soon after his time, perhaps during his life, and under his own eye." B. B. E.

The *time* when *the Pentateuch was reduced to its present form* may be determined with tolerable certainty. On the one hand, the fact that the existence of the Pentateuch and its laws is presupposed by the history and literature of Israel, of which in fact they formed the basis, compels us to fix upon a period as near to the time of Moses as other circumstances will allow. On the other hand, there are certain features in the Pentateuch itself which bring us below the lifetime of Moses, to the period of the complete occupation of the promised land. The latter portion of Joshua's life and the first years of the period of the Judges are the limits within which, in all probability, the completion of the Pentateuch falls. K.

While we might well stand firm on the position of Schultz, that Moses was both the Jehovist and Deuteronomist, using the older Elohistic records and composing the whole Pentateuch except the concluding part of Deuteronomy (and the glosses that have since crept in), we might, if we chose, hold with Kurtz that the most of Deuteronomy and large portions of the Pentateuch being written by Moses in person, the remainder was arranged and compiled under his direction before entering the promised land; or perhaps we should occupy no unwarrantable position if we held, with Delitzsch formerly, that the completion of the whole work, of which Deuteronomy and much else were by the hand of Moses, was reserved for one or more of his trusted associates, as Eleazer the priest, and Joshua, who was a prophet, or some one of the elders on whom the spirit of God rested. S. C. B.

It is not intended to assert that Moses was the original composer of all the documents contained in the Pentateuch. The Book of Genesis bears marks of being to some extent a compilation. Moses probably possessed a number of records, some of greater and some of less antiquity, of which under Divine guidance he made use in writing the history of mankind up to his own time. It is possible that the Book of Genesis may have been even mainly composed in this way from ancient narratives, registers and biographies, in part the property of the Hebrew race, in part a possession common to that race with others. Guided by God's Spirit, Moses would choose among such documents those which were historically true, and which bore upon the religious history of the human race. He would not be bound slavishly to follow, much less to transcribe them, but would curtail, expand, adorn, complete them, and so thoroughly make them his own, infusing into them the religious tone of his own mind, at the same time re-writing them in his own language. Thus it would seem that Genesis was produced. The remainder of his history he would write from his own knowledge. And it is not intended to deny that the Pentateuch may have undergone an authoritative revision by Ezra. And this would account at once for the language not being more archaic than it is, and for the occasional insertion of parentheses of the nature of a comment. It would also explain the occurrence of "Chaldaism" in the text. G. R.

That Moses was the author and writer of the Pentateuch was the belief of all Jewish and Christian antiquity. The sacred narrative itself

contains assertions of this authorship. Thus, Ex. 17 : 14, after a memorable battle, "The LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in the book (בַּסֵּפֶר);" as though there were a regular account kept in a well-known book. Again, Ex. 24 : 4, "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord." So Ex. 34 : 27, "The LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words." In Num. 33 : 2, we read that "Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord." In Deut. 17 : 18, 19, it is commanded that the king, who should hereafter reign, should "write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites;" and in Deut. 31 : 9, 10, 11, at the very end of the Pentateuch, we read, "Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi," commanding, that "at the end of every seven years" they should "read this law before all Israel in their hearing." Several times Moses himself in Deuteronomy names "this law," and "the Book of this law" (Deut. 28 : 61 ; 29 : 19, 20, 29), as though he had written a book for his people to keep. E. H. B.

The *art of writing* already existed, and was largely in use before the time of Moses. The ancient Egyptians were a race of indefatigable writers. Everything was done in writing. In all pictorial representations the scribe was ubiquitous. The *occasion* and urgent *motive* for such a composition were also in existence. Not only had a nation sprung into life, and found its independence and its institutions ; it had also found its God. Here was a grand epoch that solemnly called for memorials and records, and for an historic review of the way in which their God had led them. The aim and method of the Pentateuch spring from and are in perfect harmony with the occasion. The book is the legitimate outgrowth of that occasion. Moses had motive, opportunity, qualifications to meet the demand and compose the work. He was pre-eminently the man to appreciate the occasion, to feel the impulse, and to use the facilities. That *Moses was the responsible author* of the Pentateuch is shown by positive evidence, varied, abundant, uncontradicted. The books nowhere contain the slightest allusion to any other authorship than that of Moses. He is repeatedly mentioned as a writer engaged in the composition, and there is absolute silence concerning any other writer. The later books of the Old Testament ascribe the authorship of the Pentateuch without limitation to Moses, specially citing four of the five books in their statements. It was the undisputed testimony of the Jewish nation, at and before the time of Christ, that the Pentateuch as a whole was written by Moses. Christ and the writers of the New Testament indorse the ascription of the Pentateuch to Moses. The positive testimony lies wholly on one side ; not a hint can be found in any historic quarter that any person later than Moses composed either the volume or any integral part of it. *Collateral indications* corroborate this testimony. The existence of the Pentateuch can be traced almost up to the time of Moses, in the allusions and references of the subsequent books of the Old Testament. Egyptian words and other traces of Egyptian residence are found in these five books ; also traces of the wandering in the wilderness. A corroborative circumstance of great weight is found in the inability of the deniers of the Mosaic authorship to suggest even a plausible substitute. S. C. B.

*Internal evidence* in favor of the Mosaic authorship briefly stated. (1) The book is exactly such a one as a writer of the age, character and circumstances of Moses might be expected to produce. Its style is archaic. The life described, the ideas, the characters, have about them the genuine air of primitive antiquity. The student of the original observes that the very words themselves, the constructions, the grammatical forms, bear similar traces of a remote authorship, being often such as had become obsolete even before the composition of the Book of Joshua. (2) The writer shows a close acquaintance with Egypt, its general aspect, history, geography, manners, customs, productions and language, which would be natural to Moses, but which cannot be shown to belong naturally, or even probably, to any later Israelite, down to the time of Jeremiah. Hengstenberg (*Egypt and Moses*) has irrefutably established the exactitude and vast extent of the author's Egyptian knowledge, which is now allowed on all hands. His argument does not admit of compression, since it depends mainly on the multiplicity and minuteness of its detail ; but the impression which it leaves may be stated briefly as follows :—That either a person born and bred in Egypt about the time of the Exodus wrote the Pentateuch, or that a writer of a later age elaborately studied the history and antiquities of the Egyptians for the purpose of imposing a forgery upon his countrymen, and that he did this with such skill and success that not even modern criticism, with its lynx-eyed perspicacity and immense knowledge of the past, can detect and expose the fraud or point out a single place in which the forger stumbled

through ignorance. (3) The writer is also fully aware of all the peculiar features of the Sinaitic peninsula, and has a knowledge of the ancient condition and primitive races of Canaan, quite beyond the reach of any one who lived much later than Moses. This is natural enough, supposing that the work was composed by Moses, but would be very forced and artificial in a writer of a later age, even if we suppose such a writer to have any means of acquiring the information. G. R.

The author of the Pentateuch and the giver of the Levitical Law had an intimate acquaintance with Egypt, its literature, its laws and its religion. The language and the legislation of the Pentateuch has Canaan only in prospect. It is patent throughout that the wording, both of the laws and of the language of the lawgiver, looks forward to a future in Canaan. (See Ex. 12 : 25–27 ; 13 : 1, 5 ; 23 : 20–33 ; 34 : 11 ; Lev. 14 : 34 ; 18 : 3, 24 ; 19 : 23 ; 20 : 22 ; 23 : 10 ; 25 : 2 ; Num. 15 : 2, 18 ; 34 : 2 ; 35 : 2–34 ; Deut. 4 : 1 ; 6 : 10 ; 7 : 1 ; 9 : 1 ; 12 : 10, etc.)

It has been objected, that the writer of the Pentateuch knew too much of the geography of Palestine for one who had never been there, and that this is an argument against its Mosaic origin. This surely cannot be a valid objection, when we remember, first, that Moses with his knowledge of the history of Genesis and of the wanderings of the old Patriarchs, must have become familiarized with the geography of the land of these wanderings ; secondly, that Palestine was well known to the Egyptians, who repeatedly traversed it from the reign of Thothmes I. ; thirdly, that Moses had lived for forty years in the wilderness of Sinai feeding the flocks of Jethro, and with his active mind and his deep interest in the country of his forefathers, he was sure to have inquired about, most probably even to have visited, the neighboring plains of Palestine ; fourthly, that he had taken pains to ascertain all the character of the country, of its people, its cities and its fortresses by means of spies, and that probably for many years, as every wise general would do, when preparing to invade a hostile and powerful people. E. H. B.

The Pentateuch professes to be the work of Moses. The author does not formally announce himself, but by the manner in which he writes implies that he is Moses. This is so clear and palpable that even the antagonists of the genuineness are forced to allow it. "The author of the last four books," says one, "wishes to be taken for Moses." "The writer of Deuteronomy," says another, "would have men think that his whole book is composed by Moses." And Strauss remarks naïvely enough, "The books which describe the departure of the Israelites from Egypt and their wanderings through the wilderness, bear the name of Moses, who, being their leader, would undoubtedly give a faithful history of these occurrences, unless he designed to deceive ; and who, if his intimate connection with Deity described in these books be historically true, was eminently qualified by virtue of such connection to produce a credible history of the earlier periods. G. R.

Abraham, as the direct representative of Shem, would be the natural depository of whatever knowledge God had given either to the antediluvian or the patriarchal world. And this knowledge, carefully guarded and preserved as a most precious deposit, would account for the pure faith of Abraham and the family to which he belonged. These documents Moses would use under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit ; but it would have been impossible for any one, without miraculous intervention, to pen narratives which run so exactly alongside the Chaldean legends unless he had possessed the records of which the legends are the debased form. Their preservation from the time of Abraham to the age of Moses was a matter of course.

Nothing, too, was more natural than that the man who had been the head and leader in Israel's exodus from Egypt, and whose office it was to form it into a nation, should give its history from the very first. He was brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians, he lived in a great crisis of his people's history, he had himself been the prime mover in noble deeds, and whatever archives and documents existed belonging to the race, would be in his custody. He had abundant leisure in the wilderness at Kadesh. And no man had such a call upon him to show who Israel was, and what were the covenant rights of the race, as the hero who was leading them to Canaan to win those rights by the sword. He had to justify their war of conquest ; he had to ennoble the people and teach them who and what they were ; and he had to make them worthy to fulfil the high destiny of a family in whom, as he taught, all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. Never had man such a call upon him to write the origin of a nation as Moses, and no one can read the Pentateuch without feeling that Israel's mission and holy calling and the blessing contained within it for all mankind were motives strong and urgent, all-constraining and ever

present in the writer's mind. Furthermore, who but Moses could have traced the origin and growth of Israel as a nation from the Paradise of Adam on the Euphrates to the moment when it was finally mustered for the conquest of Canaan? *Moses did* combine the varied materials and knowledge necessary for the work, but besides Moses *there is no one.* R. P. S.

*Special Points in support of Mosaic Authorship.*

To the Hebrew nation Moses was always the first and greatest of men. The writer of Exodus is unconscious of his possessing any personal greatness at all. The points in the personality of Moses on which this writer lays the greatest stress, are his deficiencies in natural gifts and his numerous imperfections of temper and character. No notice is taken of his courage, wisdom and faith in the performance of his mission from the time of his second appearance before Pharaoh (Ex. 7 : 10). Nothing calls forth from the writer a single sentence of approval. Now this humble estimate of the deliverer and this reticence are quite intelligible and in harmony with the rest of the Scripture, if the author was Moses. They are wholly unintelligible on any other hypothesis. G. R.

*Great national observances founded upon and appealing to the national and contemporaneous knowledge of the facts,* constitute the highest possible form of testimony, and an absolutely insuperable barrier to the foisting in of fabulous statements at any period of the national existence. Consider such observances as the Passover, with its perpetual commemoration of events of which the original participants are addressed as personal witnesses ; the Feast of Tabernacles, going down coeval with the nation's history ; the Feast of Pentecost, containing in its perpetual formula (De. 26 : 1–10) a reiteration of the doings in Egypt ; the perpetual ordinance for the consecration and redemption of the first-born ; the enforcement of the law of Sabbath rest by an appeal to the Egyptian bondage ; and it is evident that none but a nation of idiots could have received such ordinances *on such pretexts,* unless the pretexts were true. Directly to one purpose, also all the continual appeals everywhere inwrought with the fundamental law of the nation, to remember the transactions in Egypt, which the original subjects of that law experienced in person. S. C. B.

Throughout the Book of Exodus, not only the actions of Moses but *his thoughts and feelings,* the very words of his colloquies with God and of his prayers breathed inwardly to God, are declared to us with openness, simplicity, and an unmistakable stamp of truth. Who but Moses could dare to lay bare to us the secret thoughts of Moses, to expose to us the very recesses of his heart? G. R.

That the Pentateuch is *not arranged in an orderly manner* is in favor of the Mosaic authorship. In Palestine the national code would have been digested and made uniform. The Pentateuch, after the close of the narrative of the Exodus, seems to have been written from time to time as occasion called for it. Inscribed on separate skins the various portions were independent of one another, and often a considerable time elapsed between the writing of one portion and that of another. Nearly forty years passed between the writing of the covenant-code in Exodus and the popular-code in Deuteronomy, and the purpose of the two was entirely distinct. R. P. S.

"Moses" is spoken of as the beginning of "the Scriptures" (Lk. 24 : 27). Moses "wrote" and left "writings" concerning Christ (Jn. 5 : 46). "The Law of Moses—the Prophets—the Psalms"—are mentioned by our Saviour (Lk. 24 : 44), "the Law of Moses" unquestionably denoting the Pentateuch. *Dic. B.*

*Summary.* The history and legislation of the Pentateuch lies at the basis of all the subsequent history of the Old Testament. It is presupposed in the Psalms. It is presupposed in the Prophets. Moses' authorship has the explicit sanction of our blessed Lord himself. The prior existence of the Pentateuch is shown by its being interwoven with all subsequent portions of the history and literature of Israel that it cannot be torn from it without the destruction of the whole. It is upon this immovable foundation that the traditional view securely reposes. The tradition is imbedded in the Scriptures from first to last, and can only be surrendered when the inspired volume itself is abandoned as untrustworthy, and Jesus ceases to be trusted as an infallible teacher. W. H. G.

*Work of Rationalistic Critics.*

The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is a thing which hitherto has not been disproved ; and the ingenious attempts of the modern reconstructed criticism to resolve the work into its various elements, and to give an account of the times when, and the persons by whom, they were written, even if they had no other fault, must be pronounced premature ; *for,* until it is shown that the book was not composed by its reputed author, the mode and time of its composition are not fit objects of research. The theological student may congratulate himself

that this is so, and that he is not called upon to study and decide between the *twenty* different views, each more complicated than the last, which continental critics have put out on this apparently inexhaustible subject. G. R.——Gesenius, De Wette, Ewald, and Bleek say that Deuteronomy was composed long after the rest of the Pentateuch. Von Bohlen, Vater, Vatke and Reuss assert that it was written first, and is the source of the ceremonial parts of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Some put the Elohist before the Jehovist ; others reverse the order. Ewald finds seven different documents, and five different authors, in the Pentateuch ; others see two different documents, and two different authors. *Shedd.*

There is an utter disagreement among the leading critics respecting the documents of Genesis. Some assert one Elohistic document, others two, and others three. In like manner some make one Jehovist ; some more. Some make the Jehovist identical with the compiler ; others make him a different person. Some make two, others three, others four, Ewald seven documents by different authors the materials of Genesis. Every one can understand that there is a great difference whether the Elohistic and the Jehovistic portions be each assigned to one person or be divided among two, three, or more persons. In these differing assignments and divisions the most celebrated critics convict each other of false criticism. They may all be wrong, but only one can be right. Considering, further, that one supposes the documents to be pre-Mosaic, others that they were written in the times of Joshua or the Judges, or in the time of David, or some centuries later, how uncertain the principles of their criticism appear, and how valueless their conclusions ! With such facts can any sane person be willing to give up the belief of centuries for such criticism as this ? *McCaul.*

In the same portion, presenting every appearance of narrative unity, they find the strangest juxtapositions of passages from different authors, and written at different times, according as the one name or the other is found in it. There are the most sudden transitions even in small paragraphs having not only a logical but a grammatical connection. One verse, and even one clause of a verse, is written by the Elohist, and another immediately following by the Jehovist, with nothing besides this difference of names to mark any difference in purpose or in authorship. Calling it a compilation will not help the absurdity, for no other compilation was ever made in this way. To make the confusion worse, there is brought in, occasionally, a third or a fourth writer, an editor, or reviewer, and all this without any of those actual proofs or tests which are applied to other ancient writings, and in the use of which this " higher criticism," as it calls itself, is so much inclined to vaunt. T. L.

Views—so diverse in themselves—start from a common assumption, and arrive at a common result. The assumption is that the Hebrew national life developed in accordance with the same general principles that have operated in other history. The result at which they arrive is that the Pentateuch was the outgrowth of the Hebrew national life, not its starting-point. Vatke put the assumption and the result concretely eight and forty years ago, when he said : " Leviticus must have followed Isaiah, for sacerdotalism always follows faith. The Pentateuch is the masterpiece of Hebrew literature. And Hebrew history is the masterpiece of ancient history. Both require to be accounted for. With the Pentateuch as a starting-point, all is explained." *Beach.*——The critical methods of Reuss, Kuenen and their school are not so much based on a candid examination of all the contents of the sacred books of Israel as they are deduced from the application of a speculative philosophy of human history to these books, and on ingenious attempts to make the philosophy account for the history. *Terry.*

After more than three quarters of a century of the ablest and most searching discussion, the following facts are to be observed : (1) The lack of any absolute or general agreement among the anatomists of the Pentateuch as to the number of parts of which it is formed ; (2) still less agreement in the assignment of the several portions to their supposed originals ; (3) and no thoroughly self-consistent theory of a supposed methodical combination of documents in whatever mode, has yet been broached—unless it is some such " supplementary hypothesis" as virtually recognizes one proper author. . . . The attempts to invalidate the traditional view in regard to the authorship of the Pentateuch may all be characterized as effort to set aside the usual laws of evidence by evasions and side-issues,—chiefly unwarranted inferences or unfounded assertions. In other words, they steadily divert the attention from the *central* features of the case to a maze of minor discussions, either without bearing on the question or unsupported by satisfactory proof. We are not to be diverted by a labyrinth of petty assumptions and ingenious, but arbitrary, suppositions, from the great decisive features of evidence, which,

if they are as old as the hills, are also as firm. The great principles of evidence cannot be set aside. S. C. B.

The work of the German and Dutch critics upon the Mosaic documents has been that of great literary critics, not archæologists. The Egyptian documents emphatically call for a reconsideration of the whole question of *the date of the Pentateuch*. It is now certain that the narrative of the history of Joseph, and the sojourn and exodus of the Israelites, that is to say, the portion from Genesis 39 to Exodus 15, so far as it relates to Egypt, is substantially not much later than 1300 B.C., in other words was written while the memory of the events was fresh. The minute accuracy of the text is inconsistent with any later date. It is not merely that it shows knowledge of Egypt, but knowledge of Egypt under the Ramessides and yet earlier. The condition of the country, the chief cities of the frontier, the composition of the army, are true of the age of the Ramessides, and not true of the Pharaohs contemporary with Solomon and his successors. These [and many similar] arguments have not failed to strike foreign Egyptologists who have no theological bias These independent scholars, without actually formulating any view of the date of the greater part of the Pentateuch, appear uniformly to treat its text as an authority to be cited side by side with Egyptian monuments. *Poole.*

The more the Pentateuch is studied, the more impossible it is to prove or to believe that it is post exilic. Saying nothing of its close connection with Egypt, and almost total disconnection with Babylon, such a burdensome religious constitution as that of the Pentateuch could not have been imposed, in the time of Ezra, upon a nation that previously had known nothing, or only a little, of it. That an agricultural people, after having lived for centuries with no such arrangement, should all at once and suddenly agree to cease from labor one day in every seven, and one whole year in every fifty years ; that all of the male population should be willing to go up three times annually to Jerusalem for religious services ; that they should go through a round of numerous and expensive sacrifices ; and lastly should contribute one tenth of their whole income to religion—that a people, not having done this previously, should suddenly make such an entire revolution in their manners and customs, is unheard of, and inexplicable by anything that appears in the condition of the Jewish nation on their return from Babylon. That an enslaved people, not yet a nation, fleeing out of Egypt under the guidance of a leader like Moses supported by the immediate presence of Jehovah in miracles and wonders, should be willing to adopt suddenly, and for the first time, such a burdensome system, is probable enough ; but that a people a thousand years old, with no such guide as Moses, and no such supernaturalism as that of the Red Sea and Sinai, should be willing, is incredible. *Shedd.*

### *Concluding Thoughts.*

If a belief in Christ really stands in such close connection with a belief in Moses as the Saviour testifies, then the consequence follows —to which the criticism of the opponents of the genuineness is necessarily driven--namely, the rejection of the authority of Christ. "And thus," says Sack, "the dawning of literature in its oldest productions, which are otherwise from the nature of the case involved in obscurity, may be proved by the words of Him who claimed the name of 'the Truth' to be even still the first and surest testimony for all inquiry which retains confidence in the words of Christ." *Hävernick.*

On any view that does not pass the bounds of reason, "the law came by Moses." The recollection of the leadership of Moses, of his grand and dominating agency in the deliverance of the people from bondage, and in laying the foundations of their theocratic polity, was indelibly stamped upon the Hebrew mind. It might almost be said that the voice of the great Lawgiver reverberates down the subsequent ages of Hebrew history, until the appearance of him whose teaching fulfilled, and in that sense superseded, the utterances of them "of old time." Ewald has dwelt impressively on the living memory, the memory of the heart, transmitted from father to son, of the great redemption from Egyptian slavery,—the standing type of the mighty spiritual deliverance to be achieved by a greater than Moses. *G. P. Fisher.*

Not only is our ancient Pentateuch not a book to be ashamed of, but it is a book to glory in,—with its wonderful elucidations of the whole early condition of our globe and of our race, with its own announcement of the most momentous events and the most vital institutions, its clear unfolding of the germs of all subsequent life, and its graphic delineations of scenes and persons otherwise shrouded in mist or hidden behind an impenetrable veil. It is the grandest of histories, the noblest series of biographies, the divine germ of all human institutions, the substructure of all religious hopes,

and the primal clew to all the past and the future of our race. S. C. B.

The deeper study of the unity and variety of the Pentateuchal narratives and laws, as we defend them against Reuss, Kuenen, and Wellhausen, and advance in the apprehension of their sublime harmony, will fructify and enrich the theology of our day, just as the deeper study of the unity and variety of the gospels by the school of Neander, in the defence of them against Strauss, Renan, and Baur, has been an unspeakable blessing in the past generation. This having been accomplished, we may look forward to a time when our eyes shall be opened as never before to the magnificent unity of the whole Bible in the midst of its wondrous variety. *C. A. Briggs.*

The Torah [Law] is the basis of the Old Testament, and the Old Testament the preparation for the religion of Redemption. What the four gospels are to the New Testament, that are the five books of the law to the Old Testament. But not merely do beginning and beginning, but beginning and end of the Old and New Testament canon, Genesis and Apocalypse, run together like the ends of a circle. The creation of the heavens and earth on the first pages of Genesis corresponds to the creation of the new heavens and the new earth on the last page of Revelation. To the first creation which had Adam for its end, corresponds the new creation which takes the second Adam for its beginning.

Thus does the Holy Scripture form a unity compacted into itself, to show that not alone this or that book, but the whole is a work of the Holy Spirit. The Torah, with its shadow of good things to come, is the root, the Apocalypse, penetrating into the "world to come," is the top. Take away the three first chapters of Genesis from the Bible, and you take away the *terminus a quo;* take away the last three chapters of the Apocalypse, and you take away the terminus *ad quem.* *Farrar.*

## Section 10.

### THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

The Jews have no title for this book but its first word—*Bereshith* (in the beginning). The Greeks called it *Genesis* (origination). All thoughtful men have recognized the value and dignity of this book as "the stately portal to the magnificent edifice of Scripture.' It is the oldest trustworthy book in the world, and conveys all the reliable information we possess of the history of man, for more than two thousand years. The *Vedas* are ancient hymns and legends: the *Zendavesta* is a speculation on the origin of things: but *Genesis* is a narrative, written with a grave archaic simplicity. It is characteristically a book of origins and beginnings,—it contains the deeply-fastened and widely-spread roots of all futurity. There is nothing afterward unfolded in the relationships of God with man, that is not at least in rudiment, or germ, to be traced in Genesis.

By the Jews the authorship of this book has always been ascribed to Moses. But it is no point of faith that every passage in Genesis came first into existence when written by the pen of Moses. Enough for us that the writer, whether in communicating fresh truth, or in compiling from pre-existing fragments of history, was so divinely guided as to form, for all time coming, a religious narrative of "the first things" on which our faith may implicitly rely. It is no reproach to the book that it is unscientific in language, *i.e.*, a stranger to the technical terms and details of modern sciences. This is just as it ought to be, if we keep in mind the times in which, and the purposes for which, it was composed. It would be most incongruous if anything but popular language were employed in so ancient a book to express physical phenomena. Indeed, the artlessness of the narrative forms alike one of its best evidences and one of its principal charms. We are not to peer into it, as into a highly-elaborated cabinet picture. It is a simple but magnificent sketch, where the outlines are of the boldest, and the grouping and coloring declare a master's hand. D. F.

The Book of Genesis is not an ill-digested collection of fragmentary documents, but a carefully arranged narrative with entire unity of purpose and plan. E. H. B.——It is neither like the Hindoo Vedas, a collection of hymns more or less sublime; nor like the Persian Zendavesta, a philosophic speculation on the origin of all things; nor like the Chinese Yih-king, an unintelligible jumble whose expositors could

twist it from a cosmological essay into a standard treatise on ethical philosophy. It is a history—a religious history. The earlier portion of the book, so far as the end of chapter 11, may be properly termed a history of the world ; the latter is a history of the fathers of the Jewish race. But from first to last it is a religious history. It is very important to bear in mind this religious aspect of the history if we would put ourselves in a position rightly to understand it. Of course the facts must be treated like any other historical facts, sifted in the same way, and subjected to the same laws of evidence. But if we would judge of the work as a whole we must not forget the evident aim of the writer. It is only in this way we can understand, *e.g.*, why the history of the Fall is given with so much minuteness of detail, whereas of whole generations of men we have nothing but a bare catalogue. And only in this way can we account for the fact that by far the greater portion of the book is occupied with three biographies. *Dic. B.*

Whether *the book of Genesis was compiled from more ancient documents* is a question entirely distinct from that of the genuineness and authenticity of the book. Moses may have been its author, and all its statements absolutely true, and yet it may have contained passages which he did not write. In a historical work extending through a period of more than two thousand years, it would be very natural that quotations should be made from preceding writings of authentic character, provided any such were in existence. It is clear that Moses must have derived his knowledge of the events which he records in Genesis, either from immediate divine revelation, or from oral tradition, or from written documents. The nature of many of the facts related, and the minuteness of the narration, render it extremely improbable that immediate revelation was the source from whence they were drawn. That his knowledge should have been derived from oral tradition, appears morally impossible, when we consider the great number of names, ages, dates, and minute events, which are recorded. The conclusion then seems fair that he must have obtained his information from written documents coeval, or nearly so, with the events which they recorded and composed by persons intimately acquainted with the subjects to which they relate. Such memoranda and genealogical tables written by the patriarchs or their immediate descendants, and preserved by their posterity until the time of Moses, may have been the sources to which he had recourse in constructing his narrative. He may have collected these, with additions from authentic tradition or existing monuments, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, into a single book.

Certain it is that several of the first chapters of Genesis have the air of being made up of selections from very ancient documents, written by different authors at different periods. The variety which is observable in the names and titles of the Supreme Being is appealed to among the most striking proofs of this fact. This is obvious in the English translation, but still more so in the Hebrew original. In Gen. 1—2 : 3, which is really one piece of composition, as the title, 5 : 4, "These are the generations," shows, the name of the Most High is uniformly *Elohim, God.* In ch. 2 : 4—ch. 3, which may be considered the second document, the title is uniformly *Yehovah Elohim, Lord God*, and in the third including ch. 4, it is *Yehovah, Lord*, only, while in ch. 5, it is *Elohim, God*, only, except in 5 : 29, where a quotation is made and *Yehovah* used. It is hardly conceivable that all this should be the result of mere accident. The changes of the name correspond exactly to the changes in the narratives and the titles of the several pieces ; and each document uniformly preserves the same name, except when a quotation is made, and then, as the fidelity of history requires, the name used by the person introduced as a speaker, is inserted. "Now do all these accurate quotations," says Professor Stowe, "impair the credit of the Mosaic books, or increase it? Is Marshall's 'Life of Washington' to be regarded as unworthy of credit, because it contains copious extracts from Washington's correspondence, and literal quotations from important public documents? Is not its value greatly enhanced by this circumstance? In the common editions of the Bible the Pentateuch occupies about one hundred and fifty pages, of which perhaps ten may be taken up with quotations. This surely is no very large proportion for an historical work extending through so long a period." Although to an English reader the hypothesis of the compilation of the book of Genesis from pre-existent documents may at first sight appear strange, yet it will bear the test of close examination. Pareau, a sober and moderate critic, uses the following strong language : "Many have observed and proved beyond a doubt, that the book of Genesis is formed of various fragments, written by divers authors, and merely compiled by Moses, and thus prefixed to his own history." He draws from the fact a strong argument in favor of the credibility and historical accuracy

of the book. The inspired authority of the work is in nowise affected by this theory, for, as Jahn has well remarked, some of the documents are of such a nature, that they could have been derived only from immediate revelation; and the whole being compiled by an inspired writer, it has received the sanction of the Holy Spirit in an equal degree with his original productions. *Bush.*

It was suggested long since by Vitringa, that Moses may have had before him "documents of various kinds coming down from the times of the patriarchs and preserved among the Israelites, which he collected, reduced to order, worked up, and where needful, filled in." A conjecture of this kind was neither unnatural nor irreverent. It is very probable that, either in writing or by oral delivery, the Israelites possessed traditions handed down from their forefathers. It is consistent with the wisdom of Moses, and not inconsistent with his Divine inspiration, that he should have preserved and incorporated with his own work all such traditions, written or oral, as had upon them the stamp of truth. E. H. B.

It is the exact knowledge of Egypt which claims Moses as the writer of those portions of Genesis and Exodus which belong to that country. And we can see no reason why Genesis should have been arranged in a series of genealogical narratives except the fact that when Moses became the ruler of Israel all the archives of the race came to be at his disposal. R. P. S.

We have the narrative in Genesis, and we have no collateral sources of information whatever. This narrative may be accepted or it may be rejected, but no man has a right to adopt one part and repudiate another. For both stand upon precisely the same authority. The oft-repeated statement of a succession of editors each revising the work of his predecessor is nothing but a conjecture. There are no traces of tribal or national partialities at work. The Jews had too much reverence for their sacred records to allow any manipulation of them. Besides, the whole appearance of the early portions of Genesis favors the common view that they are ancient records put together by Moses in order to show the basis of the great redemption to be wrought out through Israel and Israel's seed. Had these scanty narratives been worked over again and again, as we are told, surely the obvious gaps that exist would have been filled, the Elohistic and Jehovistic portions would have been separated throughout, or else interblended more copiously, and the entire book would have but one coloring from beginning to end. It is insisted, therefore, that the fragmentary character of the document, and its likeness to an ordinary *Collectanea*, are the very features which, instead of confirming the notion of a divided authorship, followed by successive revisions, rather establish the traditionary opinion that Moses took the details which came down from the patriarchs, and under divine guidance wove them into the consecutive history we now have. *Chambers.*

A part of the internal evidence lies in the form of the narrative. Its great simplicity, purity, and dignity; the sharp contrast which marks it, when laid side by side with the noblest forms of collateral tradition; the manner in which it is content to leave the mysterious and seemingly incredible, without toning it down, and without trying to explain it—these are some of the marks of a record of facts; of facts apprehended simply and clearly in their real relations; and of facts so profoundly impressing themselves upon a line of serious men, as to be held in tradition clear and unmixed, like bars of gold and inestimable jewels transmitted from generation to generation. Another part of the internal evidence lies in the matter of the narrative. Everything in it is weighty. There is not one trivial line. The profoundest themes are successively under treatment, and a purely original light irradiates them all. *Beach.*

With the utmost directness and in smaller compass than that of the briefest of the articles that to-day stigmatize it as an "old Hebrew legend," this venerable book notes and answers the whole round of questions which modern thought agrees to reckon as involving the fundamental data of history, and to the solution of which in detail successive volumes are still being given. In the form given to the facts, from the description of the earth as emerging out of chaos to that of Israel about to emerge out of Egypt, and from the rejection of Cain's progeny to the dismissal of the Oriental Civilizations with incidental allusion, there is always deliberate and intelligent rejection of that which has become obstructive or indifferent—that is to say, a recognition of the eminently modern notion of progress as dependent on the elimination of the unfit. But all the facts mentioned do not become even a background. There is a narrowing selective process. "The heaven and the earth" at first appear, but the earth alone is taken as the subject of the story. Chaos then passes, darkness falls apart, the blue vault lifts, the waters shrink, and light, air, and solid land emerge. So also the myriads of swarming life in its lower forms recede that

man may stand single and conspicuous in the foreground. Forthwith his history cleaves apart from that of the "ground from which he was taken," through the inspiration of the breath of God; and the lower creatures are equally shut out as furnishing no "help meet for him." The process of elimination goes steadily on in the strictly human history. Cain "went out" and reappeared no more. His stock, like that of Ishmael and Esau afterward, is soon dismissed from the record. The animalized antediluvians who were "flesh," were blotted out, and the idolatrous Chaldeans were left out of history, while Noah and Abraham alone were "selected" as "fitted" to "survive." The same rigid discrimination is exercised in fixing the range of history. The narrator goes on his chosen way avoiding much. He does not ignore, but neither does he dwell upon the growth of music, handicraft, or the beginnings of social and civic institutions. He is not insensible to the overhanging shadow of the massive Assyrian or Egyptian civilizations. But they do not awe or divert his thought. He leaves Nimrod's tower unfinished and Pharaoh's palace without an heir, while he pushes on to a shepherd's tent to detect in Judah and the Messianic promise the true thread of coming history. It was a marvellous prescience. For the tribe of Judah alone survives in an unbroken lineage from that earlier world and all history to-day counts backward and forward from the date when that Messianic promise was fulfilled. *J. B. Thomas.*

The book of Genesis is separable into eleven documents or pieces of composition, most of which contain other subordinate divisions. The first of these has no introductory phrase; the third begins with "this is the book of the generations;" and the others with "these are the generations." The subordinate pieces, however, of which these primary documents consist, are as distinct from each other, as complete in themselves, and as clearly owing each to a separate effort of the composer, as the wholes which they go to constitute. The history of the fall (Gen. 3), the family of Adam (4), the description of the vices of the antediluvians (6 : 1–8), and the confusion of tongues (11 : 1–9), are as distinct efforts of composition, and as perfect in themselves, as any of the primary divisions. The same holds good throughout the entire book. Even these subordinate pieces contain still smaller passages, having an exact and self-contained finish, which enables the critic to lift them out and examine them, and makes him wonder if they have not been inserted in the document as in a mould previously fitted for their reception. The memoranda of each day's creative work, of the locality of Paradise, of each link in the genealogy of Noah and of Abraham, are striking examples of this. They sit, each in the narrative, like a stone in its setting. That these primary documents came into the hands of Moses from earlier sacred writers, and were by him revised and combined into his great work, we hold it to be natural, satisfactory, and accordant with the phenomena of Scripture. It seems to have been a part of the method of the Divine Author of the Scripture to have a constant collector, conservator, authenticator, reviser, and continuator of that book which he designed for the spiritual instruction of successive ages. We may disapprove of one writer tampering with the work of another; but we must allow the Divine Author to adapt his own work, from time to time, to the necessities of coming generations. This implies, however, that writing was in use from the origin of man. M.——Every investigation into the origin of writing among the primitive tribes leads us back to the remotest misty antiquity, to a more exact investigation of which all our present helps are not adequate. Among these tribes, writing is always earlier than we can follow it historically, just as every original art certainly springs from the most direct necessities of life, and may be soonest developed by a people extensively engaged in commerce; its use for the purpose of writing history, or only of fixing laws, lies manifestly very early back. Whatever may have been the primitive Semitic people to whom half of the civilized world are indebted for this inestimable gift, so much cannot be mistaken, that it appears in history, as a possession of a Semitic people, *long before the time of Moses;* and that Israel had already, before his time, known and employed it in Egypt, can be assumed without difficulty. *Ewald.*

There is no book in the world about which more has been written than the Bible, and perhaps there is no portion of the Bible which has given rise to a larger literature than the Book of Genesis. Every word in it has been carefully scrutinized, now by scholars who sought to discover its deepest meaning or to defend it against the attacks of adversaries, now again by hostile critics anxious to expose every supposed flaw, and to convict it of error and inconsistency. Assailants and defenders had long to content themselves with such evidence as could be derived from a study of the book itself, or from the doubtful traditions of ancient nations, as

reported by the writers of Greece and Rome. Such reports were alike imperfect and untrustworthy ; historical criticism was still in its infancy in the age of the classical authors, and they cared but little to describe accurately the traditions of races whom they despised. It was even a question whether any credit could be given to the fragments of Egyptian, Babylonian, and Phœnician mythology or history extracted by Christian apologists from the lost works of native authors who wrote in Greek. The Egyptian dynasties of Manetho, the Babylonian stories of the Creation and Flood narrated by Berosus, the self-contradicting Phœnician legends collected by Philo Byblius, were all more or less suspected of being an invention of a later age. The earlier chapters of Genesis stood almost alone ; friends and foes alike felt the danger of resting any argument on the apparent similarity of the accounts recorded in them to the myths and legends contained in the fragments of Manetho, of Berosus, and of Philo Byblius. All is changed now. The marvellous discoveries of the last half century have thrown a flood of light on the ancient oriental world, and some of this light has necessarily been reflected on the Book of Genesis. The monuments of Egypt, of Babylonia, and of Assyria have been rescued from their hiding-places, and the writing upon them has been made to speak once more in living words. A dead world has been called again to life by the spade of the excavator and the patient labor of the decipherer. *Sayce.*

Genesis is *a Book of Genealogy.* The allusion to the "book of the generations of Adam" in the fifth chapter is the earliest hint we have of that passage of tradition into written permanence which is the prelude to formal history. It is no longer incredible that such a "book" or genealogical register may have existed long anterior to Moses. For the "stunted oblique-eyed" dwellers in Babylon had libraries written in strange arrow-headed characters more than 2000 years B.C., in a language which had in Moses' day gone through its career and become obsolete ; and which scholars agree to call by a name still remaining in the Genesis record —perhaps as transcribed from one of the original registers themselves—that of Accad. *J. B. Thomas.*——At an early date, which cannot yet be exactly determined, the Sumirians and Accadians were overrun and conquered by the Semitic Babylonians of later history, Accad being apparently the first half of the country to fall under the sway of the new-comers. The Accadians had been the inventors of the pictorial hieroglyphics which afterward developed into the cuneiform or wedge-shaped system of writing ; they had founded the great cities of Chaldea, and had attained to a high degree of culture and civilization. Their cities possessed libraries, stocked with books, written partly on papyrus, partly on clay, which was, while still soft, impressed with characters by means of a metal stylus. The books were numerous, and related to a variety of subjects. When the Semitic Babylonians, the kinsmen of the Hebrews, the Aramæans, the Phœnicians and the Arabs, conquered the old population, they received from it, along with other elements of culture, the cuneiform system of writing and the literature written in it. *Sayce.*

The unmistakable purpose of these genealogies is manifest in the fact that they give names and dates and nothing else. The names thus naked of incident are manifestly set like posts at definite intervals along the way, to draw the eye through their receding line into a sense of chronological perspective. The genealogies "do not," as Perowne remarks, "interrupt the order and connection of the book," but are a "most essential part of the structure," and "form, so to speak, the backbone of the whole." Ewald emphasizes the fact that Genesis "attempts very accurate time distinctions and therein betrays a genuine historical spirit, opposed to the method of the Indian Puranas." He insists that in it an "exact and continuous chronology is attempted," and that it is "the basis of all effort at chronology from Julius Africanus and Eusebius ; and itself an effort unknown to the most cultivated of the other nations." How deeply imbedded and how sacredly guarded is the idea of historic continuity in this book may be inferred from the impression it made on subsequent history. "The Bible genealogies give an unbroken descent of the house of David from the creation to the time of Christ." Through these in its opening chapters, the whole of the New Testament binds itself upon the whole of the Old, by roots that pierce through all the strata down to Adam and the first chapter. Paul claimed to be a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," and to this day the children of the "stock of Abraham" alone boast or can pretend to boast of an uninvaded purity of ancestral blood. The thread of continuity in Genesis seems sometimes momentarily to vanish, as when Abel is dead and Cain gone into exile, until it reappears in Seth ; it dwindles to a strand in Noah and Abraham, who "pass over" alone bearing the world's future ; it threatens to be cut asunder in Isaac, sole "heir of the

promise'' by Abraham's uplifted knife , but it is never in fact wholly lost. The torch once lit is passed on from hand to hand, never to go out or be independently relit. *J. B. Thomas.*

Of the Pentateuch itself, the first book, Genesis, is preparatory to the other four. These record the growth of the family of Jacob, or Israel, into the peculiar people ; the constitution of the theocracy ; the giving of a code of laws moral, ritual, and civil ; the conquest of part of the land promised to the forefathers of the nation ; and the completion of the institutions and enactments needed for a settled condition. For this order of things the first book furnishes the occasion. M.

We have in these histories a striking, varied, and ample development of human nature in different circumstances, in prosperity and adversity, in public and in private life. They lead us to the contemplation of characters of various sorts,—men eminent in goodness, and remarkable for iniquity ;—good men tarnished with evil, and wicked men adorned with many virtues. Whether the attention be directed to the leading, or to the subordinate characters, each forms a useful and interesting object for our study. Each may be regarded as a portrait drawn by an unerring hand in all the reality of truth, without concealment, and without exaggeration ; adorned with the excellence which we ought to seek, or stained with the deformity which we ought to avoid. Here, as in all the Bible, piety is taught by example. The delineation of every character, and the narrative of every occurrence, furnish instruction, warning, encouragement, or consolation. *Jos. Jones.*—— While most uninspired biographers write under the influences of prejudice, applauding, defending, censuring, or denouncing in terms not justified by the facts, it is characteristic of the Divine Word to present accurate portraits of persons and reliable accounts of events. The good deeds of bad men are recorded ; the misdoings of good men are not concealed. J. S. V.

Written in the East, the Bible characters live forever in the West ; written in one province, they pervade the world ; penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilization advances ; product of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women, and children in modern days. Then is it any exaggeration to say, "The characters of Scripture are a marvel of the mind"? *C. Reade.*

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# Section 11.

## FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS—PRELIMINARY.

The physical world has no meaning, except by and for the moral world. It is the universal law of all that exists in finite nature, not to have in itself either the reason or the entire aim of its own existence. Every being exists, not only for itself, but forms necessarily a portion of a great whole, of which the plan and the idea go infinitely beyond it, and in which it is destined to play a part. Thus inorganic nature exists, not only for itself, but to serve as a basis for the life of the plant and the animal ; and in their service it performs functions of a kind greatly superior to those assigned to it by the laws which are purely physical and chemical. In the same manner, all nature, our globe, admirable as is its arrangement, is not the final end of creation ; but it is the condition of the existence of man. It answers as an instrument by which his education is accomplished, and performs in his service functions more exalted and noble than its own nature, and for which it was made. The superior being thus solicits, so to speak, the creation of the inferior being, and associates it to his own functions ; and it is correct to say that inorganic nature is made for organized nature, and the whole globe for man, as both are made for God, the origin and end of all things. For him who can embrace with a glance the great harmonies of nature and of history there is here the most admirable plan to study ; there are the past and future destinies of the nations to decipher, traced in ineffaceable characters by the finger of Him who governs the world. Admirable order of the Supreme Intelligence and Goodness, which has arranged all for the great purpose of the education of man, and the realization of the plans of Mercy for his sake. *Guyot* ——Revelation is the only key to Creation ; the only solution of the enigma of its use, as well as of its purpose and destiny. The Christian believer alone enters on the study of nature aright. He alone feels the ineffable

majesty of that august temple of the Creator, and treads its aisles with the humility which leads to wisdom and kneels at its altars with becoming devotion. *Alford.*

The volumes of nature and of revelation both teach us the being of a God ; both ascribe to him the same perfections of knowledge, wisdom, power, and goodness ; both tell us that he created the world, and prepared it for becoming the abode of man. Both date the creation of man about 6000 years back ; and if a change so great as his introduction to the earth then took place, it is most reasonable to believe that great accompanying changes, such as are described in the first chapter of Genesis, were made on his account. *King.*

The Book of Genesis is history. It is the historical introduction to the four following books of the Pentateuch and to all following revelations. The first chapter, as the inseparable beginning of the whole, must be historical also. The Lord stamps it as real history when he recapitulates its contents on the Fourth Commandment and makes it the basis of the ordinance of the Sabbath. He treats it as authoritative history when he makes Gen. 1 : 27 ; 2 : 23, 24, the foundation of his doctrine concerning marriage and divorce. *McCaul.*

In this account of creation we are not to look for statements adjusted to science, but for statements adapted to the average mind of Hebrew readers in the age of Moses, written for their comprehension, instruction and spiritual culture. H. C.——A statement of the scientific aspects of the case, had it been revealed to the narrator, would have found, for more than three thousand years, not only no person capable of comprehending, but none capable of receiving it. Such a narrative would have been, down to the present century, a hopeless stumbling-block at the threshold of the sacred word. But the sacred history avoids everything that is scientific, and is, as was indispensable, completely popular in its method. S. C. B.

To give to Moses a lesson on the origin of the universe, to construct a complete and consecutive system of astronomy and geology, of physics and chemistry, of botany and zoology, would have had the double disadvantage of making science useless and faith impossible. The Bible does not relieve science of the necessity of bringing to light the immense wealth of the facts, the relations of cause and effect, the means employed and the ends aimed at which make up their unity, and of discovering the laws which govern them. Science, on the other hand, does not enable us to dispense with—on the contrary, it demands as necessary,—that Word from on high which shall convey to us the real meaning of this magnificent whole. *Godet.*

That the assumed standpoint of view from which these processes of creation are contemplated is on this earth and not elsewhere in the universe is certain from the fact that it was written to be read and understood by men and not by angels. Hence we must expect the facts to be presented *as they would have appeared to a supposed observer upon our globe.* H. C.——And this fact has even suggested to Godet, Kurtz, Miller and others, the idea of an original revelation in vision, by a series of what might be called dioramic representations passing before the mental eye, opened and closed by its succession of darkness and light. Such a supposition is by no means necessary. It is enough to recognize the unmistakable fact that the description is phenomenal, chiefly visual or optical. This feature appears beyond question in the case of the heavenly bodies, described not as they are, the sun a luminary, the moon a reflecting satellite, but as they appear in the heavens, the one to rule the day, the other the night. S. C. B.

The great acts of creation, primal, unique, and solitary, impress the writer's mind as so many manifestations of a world inchoate and progressive, till pronounced "good" by its Maker. As such he presents them to the reader in descriptive language. Of the causes, proximate, mediate and ultimate, in the production of the world, he would not be understood as speaking, except to unfold this all-pervading and overshadowing idea, *the* cause of all, and the power in all, is GOD. His narrative of the creation of the world is *what*, and not *how*. Indeed, what other moulding or casting of creation in language could have been truly a revelation universal and perpetual to man? Those six great acts of God will always speak the same phenomenal language, and so this narrative will always be intelligible. *W. Barrows.*

The object is to show the preparation made for man, and the place assigned to man on this earth and under heaven. So, the ordering of the earth, and sea, and sky, in six periods, each marked by an evening and a morning, or fading and growing light, is drawn out in a brief sketch, and this lies on the first page of the Bible. It is simply a sketch of God's arrangement of a dwelling-place for man—in illustration of which we may notice the importance assigned to the moon above the stars. It is named one of the "two great lights," solely because of its superior usefulness to man. In fact, the

main interest of the first chapter, after the first verse, is intended to rest on its conclusion, the origin of the human race at present inhabiting the earth. The interest of the Bible, and of all *religious* history, revolves round the Adamic race, formed for the subjugation of the earth, gifted with intellect, conscience, and dignity, and beginning their career in happy communion with Jehovah-God. D. F.

Not even the highest inspiration could have been intended to give the Biblical writers the clear insight into natural science which was reserved as a reward for the patient toil of later generations. Its purpose was to enable them to enunciate the truths of Divine Revelation, as far as they were connected with physical relations, in a form which should not militate against the objective truth of these relations, and should leave room for all future discoveries in that region. *Christlieb.*——The creative document is a grand and glorious introduction to the rest of Holy Scripture. It was not intended to teach geology or astronomy, though rightly understood it does not contradict these sciences. Its real object was to set forth two main truths—the first, that all the laws and workings of nature are the workings of God; the second, that of all this working man is the final cause. In every stage of creation God is the active principle pervading all; of all that is done man is the end, and the earth was made such as it is that it might be a fit stage for human activity. R. P. S.

Revelation uses its own language. This is not the scientific, or the language of natural causality, as it is employed to set forth the relations of cause and effect in their mediate dependencies It is not the philosophical, or the language through which there are supposed to be exhibited the reason, the necessity, or the occasions of the creative energy, irrespective of its particular sequences. It is not the metaphysical, dealing alone with ideas, laws and forces regarded from a higher plane than the natural. It is not the poetical, except as used for occasional illustration, and in connections in which the marks of the poetic character are not easily mistaken. In distinction from all these, the language of the Bible, in setting forth the creative acts, or other natural or cosmical truths, is strictly *phenomenal*, that is, it takes as representative of the remote energy—remote either in time, or causal sequence, or both—those last phenomena or *appearances* through which these remote energies finally manifest themselves directly to the senses, and which are, therefore, the same for all ages and all men—never varying like the language of science or philosophy, but as uniform and unchanging as God has made the laws of the human senses to which they are addressed. These ultimate appearances or "*the things that are seen,*" thus furnish the *name* to the *unseen* ultimate causality, or the remote creative energy they represent as its last outward result. Thus, in phenomenal language, to make the *firmament*, is to bring into being, and into action, that system or series of *physical* law, or laws, which terminates in the manifestation so named, and so also used as the common phenomenal name of its causality, however much or however little of that causality may be scientifically known in its chain of sequences *T. Lewis.*

There is a very striking passage in which Augustine deals with the only account which the world possesses of the history of Creation. Considering the age in which it was written, considering also the vague notions entertained by Augustine himself and by all the world in his time on the rank and importance of the natural sciences, it is surely one of the most remarkable passages ever written by theologian or philosopher. "For myself," he says, "I declare boldly and from the bottom of my heart, that if I were called to write something which was to be invested with supreme authority, I should desire most so to write that my words should include the widest range of meaning, and should not be confined to one sense alone, exclusive of all others, even of some which should be inconsistent with my own. Far from me, O God, be the temerity to suppose that so great a prophet did not receive from thy grace even such a favor! Yes; he had in view and in his spirit, when he traced these words, all that we can ever discover of the truth, even every truth which has escaped us hitherto or which escapes us still, but which nevertheless may yet be discovered in them." Certain it is that whatever new views may now be taken of the origin and authorship of the first chapter of Genesis, it stands alone among the traditions of mankind in the wonderful simplicity and grandeur of its words. Specially remarkable, miraculous it really seems to be, is that character of reserve which leaves open to reason all that reason may be able to attain. The meaning of these words seems always to be a meaning ahead of science, not because it anticipates the results of science but because it is independent of them, and runs, as it were, round the outer margin of all possible discovery. *Argyll.*

It is only as the fulness of the time comes, in

the brighter light of increasing scientific knowledge, that these grand old oracles of the Bible, so apparently simple but so marvellously pregnant with meaning, stand forth at once cleared of all erroneous human glosses, and vindicated as the inspired testimonies of Jehovah. *Hugh Miller.*——By proving the record true, science pronounces it divine ; for, who could have correctly narrated the secrets of eternity but God himself? . . . The grand old Book of God still stands ; and this old earth, the more its leaves are turned and pondered, the more will it sustain and illustrate the sacred Word. *Dana.*

There are two books from whence I collect my divinity ; besides that written one of God, another of His servant nature, that universal and public manuscript, that lies expanded unto the eyes of all ; those that never saw Him in the one, have discovered Him in the other : this was the scripture and theology of the heathens. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature ; which I define not with the schools, the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained for the actions of His creatures, according to their several kinds. *T. Browne.*

That the glorious universe we see around us is the work of an Almighty Creator, the true and living God, is taught in the first sentence of the Bible, and affirmed throughout all the later books of Scripture. It holds the foremost place in the two main creeds of the Christian Church, and there is taught in the words, " I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets abound in testimonies to this great truth. It is declared strongly and plainly in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament, and is proclaimed anew in the song of the heavenly elders, and in the oath of the mighty Angel, in that great prophecy which crowns and completes the written messages of God. This truth is not set before us in the Bible with nice definitions or metaphysical subtleties, which might only obscure its simple grandeur. But it plainly includes two main ideas, that there is a self-existent Being, the supreme and all-wise Creator ; and that all other beings are creatures which receive their being as the gift of His bounty, and depend from the first on His good pleasure alone. *Birks.* ——Throughout the sacred word this great fact that God is our Creator, involving the whole sphere of God in nature, stands as the first witness to his true divinity, the first proof that in him we live and have our being—the ground of the first claim upon us for supreme homage, worship, trust, love and obedience. The first lessons taught in Eden were taken from this great and open volume of natural religion. In that great conflict of ages against idolatry, the one final appeal was wont to be made to this great fact of God's Creatorship. H. C.

The Mosaic doctrine of creation rests on the two fundamental thoughts, viz. : that the production of the world proceeded from the *Word* and from the *Spirit of God.* The form of the creation of the world is the speaking, or the *word* of God ; God *says* that the things shall be, and they are. This means that the *world originated through a conscious, free divine act ;* for the word " said " is simply the utterance of conscious and free will. This excludes, first, every theory of the origin of the world by which the divine being Himself is drawn down into the genesis of the world ; and secondly, the theory according to which the divine productive activity was conditioned at least by something existing originally outside of God, and thereby limited. O.

The leading passages of Scripture on the relation of the Eternal Son to the work of Creation are 1 Cor. 8 : 6 ; Col. 1 : 15–17 ; Heb. 1 : 2 ; John 1 : 2. *Medl.*

All the laws and purposes which guide the creation and government of the Universe reside in him, the Eternal Word, as their meeting-point. The Apostolic doctrine of the Logos teaches us to regard the Eternal Word as holding the same relation to the Universe which the Incarnate Christ holds to the Church. He is the source of its life, the centre of all its developments, the mainspring of all its motions. All things must find their reconciliation at length in Him from whom they took their rise —in the Word as the mediatorial agent, and through the Word in the Father as the primary source. The Word is the final cause as well as the Creative agent of the Universe ; the goal, as He was the starting-point. J. B. L.

Our Lord is called the Word or Wisdom of God in two respects ; first, to denote His essential presence in the Father, in as full a sense as the attribute of wisdom is essential to Him ; secondly, His mediatorship, as the Interpreter or Word between God and His creatures. He is called the Word of God as mediating between the Father and all creatures ; bringing them into being, fashioning them, giving the world its laws, imparting reason and conscience to creatures of a higher order, and revealing to

them in due season the knowledge of God's will. *Newman.*

In Col. 1 : 15–20 a threefold affirmation is made as to our Lord's relation to created existence. First of all, in Him the creative energy has its original and eternal living centre ; for the declaration is not only that by Him all things were made, but in Him they were made—*i.e.*, the creative energy not only passed through Him, as the volume of a river's waters passes through its rock-hewn channels, but the creative energy dwells in Him, belongs to Him, as the life of His life, rooted in Him essentially and eternally. Nor alone are all things made by Him, but in Him they consist, that is in Him they *stand together ;* in Him the universe of created existence finds its unity and its coherence. Not only is the creative energy in Christ, not only does the universe find its coherence in Him, but He is the universal Governor of nature and of history. For Him all things exist, to serve His purpose and to manifest His glory. Or, to put the whole doctrine into a single phrase, Jesus Christ is the first cause, the efficient cause, and the final cause of all created existence. *Behrends.*

On any other hypothesis than that of divine inspiration, this first chapter of Genesis is the most unaccountable production ever written by the pen of man. This chapter was written by a man who lived far back in the early infancy of human knowledge—a man who had not, and could not have, any knowledge whatever, any least conception or suspicion, of the actual reality of the vast development of which he was telling the story. And yet of that development, going on through countless ages, he has followed the order of events in a full and comprehensive outline—an outline so true and exact that not one mistake or defect can be pointed out in it from beginning to end. How could such a thing be ? But one thing can be said,—" All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.'' *E. L. Clark.*

Holiness, sublimity, truthfulness,—these are the impressions left upon the mind of the thoughtful reader of the First of Genesis. It is equally evident, too, that it is the offspring of one conceiving mind. It never grew like a myth or legend. It is one total conception, perfect and consistent in all its parts. It is no imitation. Copies may have been made from it, more or less deformed, but this is an original painting. The evidence is found in its simplicity, unity, and perfect consistency ; while in all others the marks of a traditional derivation are to be detected. Overloaded additions, incongruous mixtures, inharmonious touches, all prove that the execution and the original design, the outline and the deformed or crowded filling up, are from different and very dissimilar sources. We are shut up to the conclusion of its subjective truthfulness, and its subjective authenticity. At a very early day to which no profane history or chronology reaches, some man who was not a philosopher, nor a poet, nor a fable-maker but one who '' walked with God,'' and was possessed of a most devout and reverent spirit—some such man, having a power of conception surpassing the ordinary human, or else inspired from above, had present to his soul in some way, and first wrote down, or uttered in words, this most wonderful and sublime account of the origin of the world and man. He believed, too, what he wrote or uttered. T. L.

Where did Moses get all this knowledge ? If he in his day possessed the knowledge which genius and science have attained only recently, that knowledge is superhuman. If he did not possess the knowledge then his pen must have been guided by superhuman wisdom. Faith has therefore nothing to fear from science. So far, the records of nature fairly studied and rightly interpreted have proved the most valuable and satisfying of all commentaries upon the statements of Scripture. The ages required for geological development, the infinity of worlds and the immensity of space revealed by astronomy illustrate, as no other note or comment has ever done, the Scripture doctrines of the eternity, omnipotence and wisdom of the Creator. Let then Science pursue her boundless course and multiply her discoveries in the heavens and the earth. Let Criticism also continue her profoundly interesting and important work. Faith need feel no fear, being assured that neither can " do anything against the truth, but for the truth.'' *McCaul.*

# Section 12.

## THE BEGINNING.

GENESIS 1 : 1, 2.

1 IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was waste and
2 void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep : and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

**1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.** This great introductory sentence of the book of God is equal in weight to the whole of its subsequent communications concerning the kingdom of nature. It assumes the existence of God ; for it is he who in the beginning creates. It assumes his eternity ; for he is before all things : and as nothing comes from nothing, he himself must have always been. It implies his omnipotence ; for he creates the universe of things. It implies his absolute freedom ; for he begins a new course of action. It implies his infinite wisdom ; for a *kosmos*, an order of matter and mind, can only come from a being of absolute intelligence. It implies his essential goodness ; for the Sole, Eternal, Almighty, All-wise, and All-sufficient Being has no reason, no motive, and no capacity for evil. It presumes him to be beyond all limit of time and place ; as he is before all time and place. It asserts the creation of the heavens and the earth ; that is, of the universe of mind and matter. This creating is the omnipotent act of giving existence to things which before had no existence. This sentence assumes the being of God, and asserts the beginning of things. Hence it intimates that the existence of God is more immediately patent to the reason of man than the creation of the universe. And this is agreeable to the philosophy of things ; for the existence of God is a necessary and eternal truth, more and more self-evident to the intellect as it rises to maturity. This sentence denies atheism ; for it assumes the being of God. It denies polytheism, and among its various forms the doctrine of two eternal principles, the one good and the other evil ; for it confesses the one eternal Creator. It denies materialism ; for it asserts the creation of matter. It denies pantheism ; for it assumes the existence of God before all things, and apart from them. It denies fatalism ; for it involves the freedom of the Eternal Being. M.

We wander back in quest of the origin of our race and of the world we inhabit till we meet this sublime declaration, *In the beginning*, GOD. ——We traverse the whole field of speculative philosophy and reach the same sublime result, *In the beginning*, GOD. We roam through the interminable ages and cycles of ages in the eras of geology, and the weary mind comes at length to the same terminus, *In the beginning*, GOD. Everywhere it is written, There is a God—a living God, a personal God, a present God. Whence came this sublime conception of God, which has never been exceeded by any philosophy since? Whence this wondrously true and accurate outline of the course of creation, in an age of the world when there was no philosophy nor science equal to such conceptions and discoveries—in an age when all the wisdom of the world upon such matters has shown itself to have been utterly and hopelessly at fault? Whence came this account of the creation but from *God* himself, by direct communication to man? J. P. T.

God, who is in a high sense the Author of Scripture, does not argue His own existence any more than a human author begins his book by proving that he himself actually lives. God is. What is the conclusion of long arguments elsewhere is the starting-point of the Bible. The name of God is stamped on the forehead of His book. D. F.

By the positive exclusion of eternity from the existence of the universe, and by repelling the idea of accidental creation, the fact of a beginning is raised in the Bible not only above all the entangling speculations of recent philosophy, but above the boldest reasonings of modern scepticism. Those who have pushed the discoveries of science to their present limit tell us that however much further they may hereafter proceed, they have no hope of gaining the least insight into that origination of matter of which the Scriptures speak. This point they regard as beyond the aim of the sciences, for each is restricted to its own facts and laws, and is necessarily silent in reference to history antecedent to itself. "To ascend to the origin of things," says Sir John Herschel, "and specu-

late on creation, is not the business of the natural philosopher." *W. Fraser.*

The writer to the Hebrews affirms that this doctrine—God the original Creator of matter—is accepted *by faith, i.e.* upon the credit of God's own testimony. "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear" (Heb. 11 : 3). Not being constructed out of matter previously apparent, they must have been made by the direct production of matter not before existing. H. C.

Reason as well as faith demands that we deny independency to whatever is created, and devoutly confess that God is "all in all." In Him, by whom they were formed, "all things consist;"—in Him all "live and move and have their being." He is the author and giver of life, and in the strictest sense it may be affirmed that every day, not less than the first, is a day of creation; every moment the word of power is pronounced from the height of the Eternal Throne—"let there be light" and life. This belief constitutes the basement-principle of all religion, and is the sentiment from which piety must take its spring. The notion of independency and of eternity, suggested by the regular movements of nature, are thus thrown off from the surface of the visible world, and go to enhance our impressions of the glories of Him who alone is eternal, unchangeable and independent. I. T.

It is an assured truth and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the mind of man to atheism, but a further proceeding therein doth bring the mind back again to religion: for in the entrance of philosophy, when the second causes which are next unto the senses do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause: but when a man passeth on further and seeth the dependence of causes and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of Nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair. *Bacon.*

The eternity of matter is to this day the foundation of the pagan idea. This principle is not only a metaphysical falsehood; it is the denial of liberty to God and man, a denial which makes an end of all morality. If any matter whatever was necessary to the Creator, He could not have formed a world absolutely good, but only the best world possible; and man can be just as little master over his own body, as God over matter. But this night of darkness and of gloom which overshadows the conception of God, of the world, and of man, is dispersed at the first word of Divine revelation: "*in the beginning God created.*" Everything, substance and form, came into being at the fiat of the creative will, which is free and omnipotent. *Hirsch.*

There must have been a commencement of the motions now going on in the solar system. Since these motions, when once begun, would be deranged and destroyed in a period which, however large, is yet finite, it is obvious we cannot carry their origin indefinitely backward in the range of past duration. The argument is indeed forced upon our minds, whatever view we take of the past history of the world. Some have endeavored to evade its force by maintaining that the world, as it now exists, has existed from eternity. But the doctrine of a resisting medium, once established, makes this imagination untenable, compels us to go back to the origin, not only of the present course of the world, not only of the earth, but of the solar system itself; and thus sets us forth upon that path of research into the series of past causation, where we obtain no answer of which the meaning corresponds to our questions, till we rest in the conclusion of a most provident and most powerful creating intelligence. *Whewell.*——Within a finite period of time past, the earth must have been, and within a finite period of time to come, the earth must again be, unfit for habitation of man as at present constituted, unless operations have been or are to be performed, which are impossible under the laws to which the known operations going on at present in the material world are subject. *There cannot be uniformity.* The earth is filled with evidence that it *has not been going on forever in the present state*, and that there is a process of events toward *a state infinitely different from the present. Sir W. Thompson.*

There is not an existing stratum in the body of the earth which geology has laid bare, which cannot be traced back to a time when it was not; and there is not an existing species of plants, or animals, which cannot be referred to a time when it had no place in the world. Their beginnings are discoverable in succeeding cycles of time. It can be demonstrated that man also had a beginning, and all the species contemporary with him, and that, therefore, the present state of the organized world has not been sustained from eternity. *Lyell.*——These statements corroborate those prophetic descriptions which are definitely historical, and forbid

modification (Ps. 102 : 26 ; Isa. 34 : 4 ; 51 : 6 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 10 ; Rev. 21 : 1). *W. Fraser.*

**Beginning.** *Reshith*, the Hebrew word for "beginning," is without the definite article. "In Reshith," Moses says, not in the Reshith, Elohim created, etc. "The meaning, then, is" In Reshith (anteriority), *i.e.* in former times, of old, God created ; and the article is omitted to exclude the application of the word to the *order* of creation. The words refer to "time or duration," not to order, and mean, not "In the beginning of creation he created," etc., but of old, in former duration, God created. How long ago is not said. The Hebrew word is indefinite. *McCaul.*

**God.** *Elohim.* From the same Saxon root as good, thus beautifully expressing the Divine benignity as the leading attribute of the most generous term for the Deity, and corresponding almost invariably to two Hebrew words, both from a common root—*ul*, to be strong. *An.*

*Elohim* occurs for the most part in the plural, and yet is connected, as here, with a verb in the singular. *Bush.*——The root probably means to be *lasting, binding, firm, strong.* Hence the noun means the Everlasting, and in the plural, the Eternal Powers. It is correctly rendered God, the name of the Eternal and Supreme Being in our language, which perhaps originally meant lord or ruler. M.

When Moses is describing the primal creative act of God, he joins a singular verb to a plural noun. Language, it would seem, thus submits to a violent anomaly, that she may the better hint at the mystery of several Powers or Persons who not merely act together but who constitute a single Agent. The Hebrew language could have described God by singular forms, such as El, Eloah, and no question would have been raised as to the strictly Monotheistic force of those words. The Hebrew language might have amplified the idea of God thus conveyed by less dangerous processes than the employment of a plural form. Would it not have done so unless the plural form had been really necessary, in order to hint at the complex mystery of God's inner life, until that mystery should be more clearly unveiled by the explicit Revelations of a later day? H. P. L.——*Elohim.* After carefully considering the various hypotheses, such as that of the plural of majesty of the Rabbins, and the primitive polytheism supposed by certain rationalists, I can see no better reason than an attempt to give a grammatical expression to that plurality in unity indicated by the appearance of the Spirit as a distinct actor in the next verse. *Dawson.*

God is the eternal, independent, and self-existent Being ; the Being whose purposes and actions spring from Himself without foreign motive or influence ; He who is absolute in dominion ; the most pure, the most simple, the most spiritual of all essences ; infinitely benevolent, beneficent, true, and holy ; the cause of all being, the upholder of all things ; infinitely happy because infinitely perfect and eternally self-sufficient, needing nothing that He has made ; illimitable in His immensity, inconceivable in His mode of existence, and indescribable in His essence ; known fully only to Himself, because an infinite mind can only be fully comprehended by itself. In a word, a Being who, from His infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived, and, from His infinite goodness, can do nothing but what is eternally just, and right, and kind. *A. Clarke.*——So great a revelation had never been made to man, for it disclosed the existence of the One eternal, holy, just and good God,—a God of wisdom and order, as well as purity and truth, and implied His right to our absolute obedience and love, as the work of His hands. There remained only another self-disclosure, of still greater condescension, when He declared Himself to mankind in the person of His incarnate Son. *Geikie.*

**Create** (*bara*), *give being to something new.* It has God always for its subject. Its object may be anything : matter (5 : 1) ; animal life (5 : 21) ; spiritual life (5 : 27). The verb in its simple form occurs forty-eight times (of which eleven are in Genesis, fourteen in the whole Pentateuch, and twenty-one in Isaiah), and always in one sense. M.——In the first two chapters of Genesis we meet with four different verbs to express the creative work of God, viz. to create ; to make ; to form ; to build. The word *bara* is evidently the common word for a true and original creation, and there is no other word in Hebrew which can express that thought. E. H. B.——Bara never appears as the word for human creations, differing in this from the synonyms "asak," "yatzar," "yalad," which are used both of men and of God—it is never used with an accusative of the material, and even from this it follows that it defines the divine creative act as one without any limitations, and its result, as to its proper material, as entirely new ; and as to its first cause, entirely the creation of divine power. *Delit.*——There is one special sense in which God can make and man cannot, viz. that of bringing into existence what had no existence before. Over against this, place the fact that the word "bara" is used of God's making forty-eight times and of

man's making never, and we conclude that the Hebrew expressed by this word that distinctive power of God which man never can even approach—viz., the power to *give existence to matter, to mind and to life.* In passages where this sense of "bara" is appropriate, there can be no question that it is the real meaning. H. C.——It occurs in this chapter only on three occasions, the *first* creation of matter in the first verse, the *first* introduction of life in the fifth day, and the *creation* of man in the sixth day. *Bará* is thus reserved for marking the first introduction of each of the three great spheres of existence—the world of matter, the world of life, and the world spiritual, represented by man in this visible economy—all three of which, though profoundly distinct in essence, are intimately associated, and together constitute all the universe known to us. *Guyot.*——As *bara* is exclusively appropriated to God so God alone is called Boré, Creator. Creation is therefore, according to the Hebrew, a Divine act.

The idea of *creation out of nothing*, that is, that God did not produce the world out of anything outside of himself, is in accordance with the doctrine of Mosaism. How later reflection laid hold of the simple utterances of the record of creation, and carried out farther the thoughts contained in them, is especially shown in Ps. 104 (which is really a commentary on Gen. 1). O.——That the first verse of Genesis teaches that the original creation of the world in its rude and chaotic state was from nothing, while in the remaining part of the chapter the elaboration and distribution of the matter thus created is taught, the connection of the whole section shows sufficiently clearly. *Gesenius.*——This *creation* of things from nothing speaks an infinite power. The distance between nothing and being, hath been always counted so great, that nothing but an infinite power can make such distances meet together ; either for nothing to pass into being, or being to return to nothing. To imagine so small a thing as a bee, a fly, a grain of corn, or an atom of dust, to be made of nothing, would stupefy any creature in the consideration of it ; much more to behold the heavens with all the troop of stars, the earth with all its embroidery, and the sea with all her inhabitants of fish, and man, the noblest creature of all, to arise out of the womb of mere emptiness. Indeed God had not acted as an almighty Creator if he had stood in need of any materials but of his own framing. *Charnock.*

**The heaven and the earth.** There is no single word in the Hebrew language corresponding to our English word *universe.* The phrase "the heaven and the earth" is the nearest equivalent to it, and is here doubtless used to signify the whole system of which our earth forms a part : the sun, the planets with their satellites, and the fixed stars, with all that belong to them. So Moses understood the expression, for he afterward wrote : "The Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." *Armstrong.*——Consequently these uncounted tenants of the skies, along with our own planet, are all declared to be in existence before the commencement of the six days' creation. The subsequent verses reveal a new effort of creative power, by which the pre-adamic earth, in the condition in which it appears in the second verse, is fitted up for the residence of a fresh animal creation, including the human race. M.

The simplest exposition seems to be that ver. 1 is not meant to be a title of the whole, but rather the declaration how a first creation of heaven and earth as *prima materia* preceded the process portrayed from the second verse onward ; compare how Job 38 : 4–7, supposes a *prius* preceding the creation of the earth. By the absolute *Bereshith* the divine creation is fixed as an *absolute* beginning, not as a working on something which already existed, and heaven and earth is wholly subjected to the lapse of time, which God transcends ; compare Ps. 90 : 2 ; 102 : 26. O.——The first verse *may* be understood as relating to a *primeval creation, complete* in itself, but which, by some catastrophe, had become desolate and dark (as described in ver. 2)—in which case the work of the six creative days would be a restitution or new creation of the earth which had become desolate. *The narrative before us does not decide this point.* The writer does not inform us whether the earth had been created "without form and void," or whether and by what process it had become such. Besides this account and the hymn of creation (Ps. 104), we have another description of several points in the process of creation, in Job 37 : 3, etc. Therein it is declared that when the Almighty founded the earth, the *morning stars* rejoiced, and the *sons of God* sang in praise of the divine wisdom and power then displayed. Hence the *morning stars* and *sons of God* must have existed *previous* to the six creative days. K.

Inasmuch as every one of the six days' works opens with **And God said,** it is required by the symmetry of the narrative that the first day's work should begin at ver. 3, and that vv. 1, 2, should be regarded as introductory matter. This being so, we have in it three propositions.

First, originally God created the heaven and the earth. Secondly, at a certain time formlessness and darkness prevailed. Thirdly, the Divine Spirit wrought upon this chaotic state. And thus the way is prepared for the six-days' work. *Alf.*——The length of time that may have elapsed between the events recorded in the first verse (of the first chapter of Genesis) and the condition of the globe, as described in the second verse, is absolutely indefinite. How long it was, we know not; and ample space is therefore given to all the requisitions of geology. The second verse describes the condition of our globe, when God began to fit it up for the abode of man. The first day's work does not begin till the third verse. This is no new theory. It was held by Justin Martyr, Basil, Origen, Theodoret, and Augustine--men who came to such a conclusion without any bias, and who certainly were not driven to it by any geological difficulties. *Eidie.*

*Objections.* The view that the geological ages might be contained in the time between the beginning and first day, involves a strained interpretation of the passage, and is contradicted by the fact that no chaotic period intervenes between the human period and the preceding tertiary ages. *Dawson.*——1. The sacred writer gives no intimation of such an interval. There is no indication that it was present to his mind, and no reason for it in the connection. 2. It assumes that the writer has given us only an account of a part of the Creator's work; that for unknown ages the earth was peopled with vegetable and animal life, of which no record is made. 3. Scientific investigation shows that no such convulsion, as is assumed in this theory, occurred at the period preceding the creation of man. 4. It is an unworthy conception of the Creator and his work. Why was the creation extended through six natural days, when a single divine volition would have brought the whole universe into being, with all its apparatus for the support of life, and its myriads of living beings? Its extension through six successive periods, of whatever duration, can be explained only by the operation of those secondary causes, which the structure of the earth itself proves to have been active in its formation, requiring ages for their accomplishment. T. J. C.

**2.** This verse cuts clear of the universe at large, or even of the solar system, and confines itself to "the earth." This fact would seem to preclude the view advanced by high scientific authorities, that in a subsequent verse the dividing of the waters from the waters was the separation of the earth from the nebula of which it was a part, and forces us to a simpler and narrower explanation. "The earth"—to which our attention is now confined—was after its creation "without form and void," literally "wasteness and emptiness," in other words a chaotic mass, described by two archaic Hebrew words, and in the next breath designated as "the deep;" perhaps because no other than this last term could so vividly describe the vast, confused, unstable, and, it may be, heaving and roaring mass of material in its earlier stages, as the vast ocean abyss. S. C. B.——The verb in this sentence is in the perfect state, and therefore denotes that the condition of confusion and emptiness was not in progress, but had run its course and become a settled thing, at least at the time of the next recorded event. M. ——Unless the context forbids, it may just as well be understood in the preter past;—"and the earth *had been* without form and void." How long no one may know. The *tohu* and *bohu* may have been a rudimentary chaos which had never yet assumed order—such as we may suppose to have been the condition of perhaps many an elemental world—or it may have been a chaos to which some world or system had been reduced from some previously better state. It may have lain long in ruins; it may have gone through an immense number of older cycles; or it may be that it was now for the first time made the subject of a *creation*, that is, according to the Latin word, an orderly *growing* through harmonious laws, or, according to the Hebrew conception, a *separating*, a *dividing*, a clearing up, a bringing into order, an arranging of outward relations, by which it comes in harmony with the exact measurements of universal, objective time, and is thus prepared for the abode of life, happiness and rationality. T. L.

**The Spirit of God.** Science cannot tell how the change from the chaotic, the desolate and the empty, was effected. Moses informs us that it was by the action of the Divine Spirit. According to the Old Testament, the Spirit of God is the quickening principle of the world, and all life is an outgoing from God. *McCaul.*

——**Moved.** It is significant that the same science which has bound "the heavens and the earth" in a single belt of law—which has established a positive beginning for them—which has detected the traces of a single hand in the uniform structure of all, and so illustrated the first word of Scripture concerning the origin of the universe,—has given us, as its last solution of the secret of the unfolding earth, the one word, "*motion*"—motion, of which light, heat, and electricity, are "modes," and of which

matter is but the phenomenal vehicle. Is it not curious—after learning from Hebrew scholars that the "moving" of the Spirit (which in the Scripture was followed at once by light) means literally a "trembling," as of brooding wings—to read from Professor Tyndall's pen the statement that "the splendor of the starry firmament is the transported *shiver* of bodies countless millions of miles distant"? After four thousand years, once more man "thinks God's thought after him"—the word with which science ends its inquiry after the origin of things is the same with which Moses began his "book of origins"—"the Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters." *J. B. Thomas.*

The word conveys the idea of brooding over—cherishing—the act of incubation which a fowl performs when hatching its eggs, and the particular form of the verb implies a continuance of this action. It was not the self development of powers inherent in matter. The creative movement was made by the will of God; and as if to refute the doctrine of Pantheism, it is expressly stated that the action was not *in* but *upon* the face of the waters. *Jamieson.*——We render it *brooded;* or it might be translated, *hovered.* Either of these words would present the primary image, or conception, better than the term in our common version. Any one may be as certain of its meaning as the best Hebrew scholar, by just turning to Deuteronomy 32 : 11,—"*As the eagle hovers, or broods, over its young.*" It is the same word and the same conception. T. L.

The drama of creation opens with chaos, and the Holy Spirit brooded over the waters; then chaos became cosmos, order. The Spirit garnished the heavens. All the beauty of the world, physical as well as spiritual, is from the Holy Spirit. He gives wisdom, inspires prophets, works in regeneration and sanctification, and enkindles love to God. This is not speculation. This is what God reveals. *A. A. Hodge.*

## Section 13.

### FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD DAYS.

GENESIS 1 : 3–13.

3 AND God said, Let there be light : and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was
4 good : and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the
5 darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.
6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the
7 waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were
8 under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament : and it was so. And
God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second
day.
9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and
10 let the dry land appear : and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth ; and the gather-
ing together of the waters called he Seas : and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let
11 the earth put forth grass, herb yielding seed, *and* fruit tree bearing fruit after its kind, wherein
12 is the seed thereof, upon the earth : and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, herb
yielding seed after its kind, and tree bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after its kind :
13 and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

First Day. Vast in its outline, this remarkable history is yet so scrupulously strict in its minuter details, that it may be read without dubiety, not only in the midst of the exactest records of antiquity, but in the light of those modern discoveries in physical science which bear most directly on its statements. In reliableness and in consistency it stands alone. The myths of heathenism regarding the origin of the world can be easily separated from it. While it contains every element of truth which imparts to them any coherency which they possess, it gives no place to their grotesque and deformed traditions. *W. Fraser.*——When the Pentateuch was written mankind was absorbed in the grossest idolatry; and that idolatry, for the most part, originated in the neglect, the perversion, or the misapprehension of certain truths, which had once been universally known. Moses therefore commences his narrative, by relating the creation of the world by the one true God, in opposition to the Egyptian doctrines of the necessary eternity of the world, and an infinite succession of similar worlds.

G. T.——In no other passage, perhaps, does the incomparable pre-eminence of these creative acts of the one Jehovah above the confused and uncertain creative efforts of the Assyrian pantheon so clearly appear. Here is the one God, who unites in himself everything divine which the heathen world divided among its many gods. Here the creation is not a necessitated emanation from his essence, or from wild chaos, but something brought into existence by the free will of the Absolute One. Here is an ascending gradation of acts of creation to the supreme aim. This supreme aim is not, as in the Babylonian account, one or another concurrent cause, not a God, not a new Lord of heaven, but an image of God, "a King of the earth, the synthesis of Spirit and Nature." We have here, on the threshold of the revelation of God to men, a tradition of creation free from mythological additions; here the true idea of God is announced in the midst of a heathenism sunk far and wide in unbelief and apostasy, and in this announcement we have the foundation of all true religions and culture. In the Babylonian account of creation, a multitude of conceptions concerning God and divine things betrays what we may call the childhood of the people; but the creative agency of God, as exhibited in the first chapter of Genesis, is so perfect that the purest knowledge of God is unable to improve upon it in the least. O.

**And God said.** This is the word which gives the key-note to the narrative, the burden, ten times repeated, of this magnificent poem. To *say* is both to think and to will. In this *speaking* of God, there is both the legislative power of His intelligence, and the executive power of His will; this one word dispels all notion of blind matter, and of brute fatalism; it reveals an enlightened Power, an intelligent and benevolent Thought, underlying all that is. At the same time that this word, "*And God said,*" appears to us as the veritable truth of things, it also reveals to us their true value and legitimate use. Beautiful and beneficent as the work may be, its real worth is not in itself; it is in the thought and in the heart of the Author to whom it owes its existence. Whenever we stop short in the work itself, our enjoyment of it can only be superficial, and we are, through our ingratitude, on the road to an idolatry more or less gross. Our enjoyment is only pure and perfect when it results from the contact of our soul with the Author himself. To form this bond is the true aim of Nature, as well as the proper destination of the life of man. Behind this veil of the visible universe which dazzles me, behind these blind forces of which the play at times terror-strikes me, behind this regularity of seasons and this fixedness of laws, which almost compel me to recognize in all things only the march of a fixed Fate, this word, "*And God said,*" unveils to me an Arm of might, an Eye which sees, a Heart full of benevolence which is seeking me, a Person who loves me. *Godet.*——If we remove the term GOD from this chapter, we leave behind a mystery of darkness; when we reinsert the term GOD we import the nobler mystery of light. In a very plain sense there is, so far as the visible creation is concerned, less mystery *with* a Creator than *without* one; since *there is nothing but mystery* on the side of atheism. Here is the Christian standpoint, and here the Christian resting ground—God the mighty and holy Maker of all things. J. P.

**3. Let there be light.** The most elegant critic of the heathen world has produced the opening of this narrative, as the most striking specimen of the true sublime which could be presented. "God said—what? Be light; and light was. Be earth, and it was so." *Enc. Met.*——The substantive verb is used here, and not either the words "create" or "made." It was the manifestation of what had been previously in existence—Let light be, or, rather, Light shall be, not the formation of an element, or matter, which had no being at all till the divine command was issued. Where all had been involved in darkness, there was an alternation of light; and as unbroken gloom had reigned previous to this happy change, so, in describing the physical arrangement that was now established, this natural sequence is preserved, and the evening is reckoned before the morning. *Jamieson.*

It is now an established truth, that Light is in its nature entirely independent of the sun. It is a vibration of the ether, in which the sun is, in our time, no doubt, the chief agent, but which may be produced by the action of many causes. Science proves that there is a light, other than that of the sun, which possesses all the properties required by vegetation, and that this light existed at the beginning of the world. *Godet.*——The phenomena of light have been proved to be a result of molecular action, and to be dependent upon fundamental qualities of matter as now constituted. Man has ascertained the wave-lengths in the vibration of molecular force corresponding to light of different parts of the spectrum, and also other laws of light. He has found, moreover, that the laws of heat and of electrical and chemical action are so involved with those of light that all these conditions are convertible and one in molecular origin. *Dana.*

**4.** *God saw that the light was good;* that is, He predestined it for its multiform uses in the economy of vegetative and animal life, and in the development of the human intellect. And it was He who separated the light from the

darkness ; He retained the control of the force which He had created, and appointed of His foreknowledge the alternations of day and night. In like manner with all the forces of nature afterward to be discovered in scientific research —heat, electricity, galvanic currents, chemical affinities, actinic rays, whatever they were— they came at God's command, they were foreseen by Him as good, and designed for their uses, and they are retained in His power of guidance. *Hill.*——Every created work is to us an evidence of God's mercy and wisdom ; to Himself a source of fresh joy. The expression so constantly repeated, "God saw that it was good," declares to us that God is the holy source of all good, and that in this world there lies no incentive to sin, but sin is the fault of man. *Gerl.*——The sacred writer has it, from the first, in his purpose to affirm the absolute goodness of the Divine works : and this formula is only another and a more detailed method of saying that all creation followed the behest and the character of its maker, himself all good. *Alf.*

**5. Evening and morning, one day.** The evening is mentioned first because the darkness preceded the light. On the ground of this recorded order of things in the sacred narrative, the Jews commenced their day of twenty-four hours from the evening. *Bush.*——Beyond all question the word "day" is used abundantly (and therefore admits of being used) to denote a period of special character, with no particular reference to its duration. We have a case in this immediate connection (Gen. 2 : 4), where it is used of the whole creative period (see Eccl. 7 : 14 ; Joel 2 : 2 ; Luke 19 : 42, etc.). H. C. ——In the Hebrew Scriptures the word *day* is used : (1) For past or future time, without limit (Isa. 30 : 8 ; Prov. 31 : 25). (2) For a future prophetic period of indefinite limit (Isa. 2 : 11, 17 ; Ezek. 38 : 14). (3) For a period of time, in history (Jud. 18 : 1 ; 1 Sam. 8 : 18). (4) For a season of the year (Prov. 25 : 13). (5) For a period of life, as of old age (Eccl. 12 : 3). (6) For any specified time of indefinite length (1 Sam. 3 : 2). T. J. C.

There are the days which *God divided*—supernaturally divided by his own direct immediate power originating a new thing, or a new work, in nature—and there are the days of which he said, "let the sun divide them," natural days, measured off in the regularly returning course of nature, and marking the interior divisions of that nature instead of being its exterior chronological bound. Here is this wondrous difference patent on the very face of the account. Can we read of these two kinds of days so strikingly contrasted in their natural and supernatural character, their God-made and sun-made modes of division, and yet believe that they must be exactly alike in all the other features with which we are familiar as belonging to our solar periods? . . . The Bible does not teach that the creative days were twenty-four hours long ; but leaves a great latitude in this respect, determining nothing about their duration, except that they must be in some kind of conceived harmony with the growths and processes assigned to each. Hence this view of indefinite periods may be applied in various ways. It may be supposed to embrace the whole physical history of our earth from its earliest condition of being, or it may refer merely to the successive steps by which an old chaotic earth was renewed, and a new division of land and water, a new vegetation, a new animal life, etc., were made to succeed older growths and older creations, which had long before run through their cycles. The writer would confess his partiality for the first supposition, as the second burdens the conceptive faculty with the idea of a series of great creations, as well as of great periods in each creation. T. L.

THE SECOND DAY.

**6–8.** And God said, *Let there be a firmament* (expansion, "*rakiah*") *to divide the waters, and he called the firmament Heaven.* This was the sky, that pure and transparent expanse of air above us, the atmosphere with its inexhaustible springs of life and blessing, providing the necessary means of nourishment to every kind of living beings that were to appear on earth. This sky rests on the waters of the earth, and like a firm arch supports the oceans of heaven. Thus it divides the upper from the lower waters, the sea from the clouds which rise from it, that in turn they also may become a spring of blessing and fruitfulness to the dry land when it shall have been emancipated from the dominion of the sea. K.——We, describing the expanse, would say that it lay between, or separated, the clouds and the *earth.* But the historian speaks as things would have appeared to a spectator at the time of the creation. A portion of the heavy, watery vapor was carried into the upper regions, and rested there in dense clouds, which still obscured the sun ; while below, the whole earth was still covered with water, for the dry land had not yet appeared. Thus we see the propriety with which the firmament is said to have divided "the waters from the waters." *Kit.*——This harmonizes with what is known of

the processes of evaporation to which the clouds are subject as they float above us—lakes of water in the azure vault. The firmament sustains the waters collected in its scattered clouds, and separates them from those resting on the surface of the earth. Take, in connection with this, what Solomon has written, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. 1:7); and we may fairly press the question, Can any brief description more exactly set forth what has been ascertained as to the settled *course* of evaporation? *W. Fraser.*——**7. Waters above the firmament.** The quantity of water suspended in the atmosphere is enormous; and the rains, the springs, and rivers which fertilize the earth and sustain its inhabitants, are only the overflowings of this vast aerial reservoir, upheld by the laws established by God. *Dawson.*

An unscientific reader knows little about the manner in which the volume of the atmosphere surrounds the earth; but I imagine that he could hardly glance at the sky when rain was falling in the distance, and see the level line of the bases of the clouds from which the shower descended, without being able to attach an instant and easy meaning to the words, "expansion in the midst of the waters." And if, having once seized the idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed anything of the nature of the clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed most severely and stringently divide "waters from waters," that is to say, divide water in its collected and tangible state from water in its divided and aerial state; or the waters which *fall* and *flow* from those which *rise* and *float*. I understand the making the firmament to signify that (so far as man is concerned) most magnificent ordinance of the clouds; the ordinance that as the great plain of waters was formed in the face of the earth, so also a plain of waters should be stretched along the height of air, and the face of the cloud answer the face of the ocean; and that this upper and heavenly should be of waters, as it were, glorified in their nature, no longer quenching the fire, but now bearing fire in their own bosoms; no longer murmuring only when the winds raise them, or rocks divide, but answering each other with their own voices from pole to pole; no longer restrained by established shores, and guided through unchanging channels, but going forth at His pleasure like the armies of the angels and choosing their encampments on the height of the hills: no longer hurried downward forever, moving but to fall, nor lost in the lightless accumulation of the abyss, but covering the East and the West with the waving of their wings, and robing the gloom of the farther infinite with a vesture of divers colors, of which the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame. *Ruskin.*

**8. God called the firmament heaven.** We have here an interesting and instructive example of the way in which words expand in their significance from the near, the simple, the obvious, to the far and wide, the complex and inferential. The heaven, in the first instance, meant the open space above the surface in which we breathe and move, in which the birds fly and the clouds float. This is the atmosphere. Then it stretches away into the seemingly boundless regions of space, in which the countless orbs of luminous and of opaque surfaces circumambulate. Then the heavens come to signify the contents of this indefinitely augmented expanse,—the celestial luminaries themselves. Then, by a still further enlargement of its meaning, we rise to the heaven of heavens, the inexpressibly grand and august presence-chamber of the Most High, where the cherubim and seraphim, the innumerable company of angels, the myriads of saints, move in their several grades and spheres, keeping the charge of their Maker, and realizing the joy of their being. M.

### Third Day.

**9-13.** We have now a purer and a clearer sky; but still our earth is drenched with water, and unfit for production. The water must be partly removed, and confined within proper bounds; and this is the work of the third day of creation. "And God said, 'Let the waters be gathered together into one place; and let the dry land appear.'" The historian adds, "And it was so;" but he gives us no details of the operation. *Kit.*——The *third* day witnessed two consecutive and connected acts of creation—the separation of the sea from the dry land, and the clothing of the latter with vegetation. The creative word of the third day set free the earth from the dominion of the sea, which till then had engulphed and covered everything. The dry land is the habitation of the noblest of God's creatures; therefore the creative word of Omnipotence liberated it from the dominion of the sea, and assigned to the latter its bounds. K.

The gathering of the waters into one place implies no more than that they were, from this day forward, to be collected into one vast body, and restrained within bounds in a place by them-

selves, so as to admit of the exposure of the earth's soil. The "place founded for them" was, of course, the depths and hollows in the earth's crust, into which they were immediately withdrawn, not through direct supernatural agency, but by their own natural gravitation. The configuration of the dry land is not described ; but there is reason to believe that the original distribution of land and water was the same, or nearly the same, as it is at present. *Whitelaw.*——The sacred singer possibly hints at the process in Ps. 104 : 6-8 : "The deep as a garment thou didst spread over it ; above the mountains stood the waters. At thy rebuke they fled ; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up the mountains ; they go down the valleys ; unto the place that thou hast founded for them." This description is highly poetical, and therefore true to nature. The *hills* are to rise out of the waters above them. The agitated waters dash up the stirring mountains, but, as these ascend, at length sink into the valleys, and take the place allotted for them. Plainly the result was accomplished by lowering some and elevating other parts of the solid ground. Over this inequality of surface, the waters, which before overspread the whole ground, flowed into the hollows, and the elevated regions became dry land. This disposition of land and water prepares for the second step, which is the main work of this day ; namely, the creation of plants. M.

The language conveys the thought of a process of some kind, longer or shorter. There is that which looks like a causation, a train of sequences, –or, in other words, an energizing of *natural* powers producing natural results. We have every reason to believe that the earth and water, as they existed at the beginning of the third day, possessed, in the main, the natural properties which they now possess, the same or a similar gravity, the same density, the same resistance, the same laws of fluidity, of pressure, of repulsion ; and that the same or similar effects would have followed from their action upon each other, according as that action was slower or more rapid, that is, took place in a longer or shorter time. And so, also, in respect to the processes of evaporation and aridification ; they must have had some analogy at least to the same processes as they now take place. This is only saying, that if there is a nature, there must be a harmony, a consistency in it. Such an apparent process of moving waters could not have taken place throughout all the wide earth and ocean, within the time of a few hours, without utterly deranging all such causal dependence, even if we suppose the laws of nature to have been much more rapid in their action than they have been since ; of which, however, there is no intimation in the account. T. L.

**12. Grass, herb yielding seed, fruit tree bearing fruit.** The plants now created are divided into three classes,–grass, herb, and tree. In the first, the seed is not noticed, as not obvious to the eye ; in the second, the seed is the striking characteristic ; in the third, the fruit, "in which is its seed," in which the seed is enclosed, forms the distinguishing mark. This division is simple and natural. It proceeds upon two concurrent marks,–the structure and the seed. In the first, the green leaf or blade is prominent ; in the second, the stalk ; in the third, the woody texture. In the first, the seed is not conspicuous ; in the second, it is conspicuous ; in the third, it is enclosed in a fruit which is conspicuous. It appears from the text that the full plants, and not the seeds, germs, or roots, were created. The land sent forth grass, herb tree, each in its fully developed form. M.——The earth brought forth plants, yet they were made after their species, and, when made, a new relation was established between solar light and the earth, by which not only a new beauty was given to the world, but a new power of producing those marvellous organic compounds on which animal life, with all its further endowments, would be founded. If one looks at the structure of a leaf, with its vessels and fibres drawing into it the soil water taken up by the stem ; its microscopic sac-like cells piled loosely on each other, its hygrometric breathing pores opening and shutting with every atmospheric change, and considers that this delicate organ is fitted for exposure to wind, sun, and rain, and through all to avail itself of undulations transmitted through 90,000,000 of miles of space, by means of which it can convert all the gases of putrescent matters from the soil and air into the endless variety of products of the plant, we have before us a marvel of adaptation perhaps inferior to no other in affording an inductive argument for design. *Dawson.*

An immense advance in the career of Creation is marked by these phrases : "*whose seed is in itself, yielding fruit after its kind.*" These are expressions you would never apply to anything inorganic, but only to living things, which do have seed in themselves, and which do yield fruit after their kinds. These phrases mark the eternal boundary between the organic world and the inorganic ; between life and absence of

life. Strikingly, too, these phrases, "yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself," involve the doctrine of the invariability of species. G. D. B.——The doctrine of the transformation of species is most decidedly contradicted by facts. Not only has no new species originated during the period of human history, but even the lignites (or woody coal), which go back to a much earlier time, exhibit the existing flora. The present Swiss Alpine plants are the descendants of the Alpine drift flora, but, though living under different physical conditions, it is impossible to distinguish those of the present day from plants of the drift flora of Iceland and Greenland. It is the same with marine animals. No new species has had its origin since the drift period. Nor is this peculiar to the drift. The same facts are true of preceding geological periods. The same species maintain their existence through long cycles, and often, in all parts of the globe, present precisely the same characteristics. The formation immediately following any earlier period, and belonging to a new epoch, may contain some species inherited from the preceding period, but the greater part of the species show us a new type, and present distinct characteristics. There are no forms which would indicate a fusion of species. *Heer.*

The system of the transformation of species is no less refuted by science than by the instincts of common-sense. It rests upon no tangible fact, on no principle of scientific observation or historic tradition. All the facts ascertained, all the monuments collected in different ages and different places, respecting the existence of living species, disprove the hypothesis of their having undergone any transformation, any notable and permanent change. *Guizot.* ——In the expressions, "yielding seed," "having seed in itself," the words describe with wonderful precision the characteristic of a living species, distinguishing it from mineral or inorganic substances. Beings having powers of growth and reproduction were now facts. With reference to the introduction of life, science has no explanation; for no experiments have resulted in making from dead matter a living species. We can only say, "God created." The growing plant is on a higher level than that of ordinary molecular law; for it controls and subordinates to itself chemical forces, and thereby is enabled to make out of mineral matter chemical compounds and living structures which the forces without this control are incapable of. Only when growth ceases, and death consequently ensues, does ordinary chemical law regain control, and then decomposition commences. More than this, the living being, before it dies, produces germs which develop into other like forms, with like powers; and thus cycles of growth are continued indefinitely. In making its tissues, the living plant is storing force for the sustenance and purposes of beings of a still higher grade—those of the animal kingdom; beings that cannot live on mineral materials. There is, hence, reason for believing that the power which so controls and exalts chemical forces, raising them to the level required by the functions of a plant, cannot come from unaided chemical forces; and much less that which carries them to a still higher level, —that of the living, sentient animal. *Dana.*

Whence came that original first Life? The answer to this question marks the boundary-line between theism and atheism, between plan and chance, between personal will and impersonal law, between first cause and eternal necessity, between God and zero. Whence, then, came that first Life? Is there any better answer, any answer more profoundly philosophical or gloriously satisfying, than the child-like answer of the far-off, hoary witness of the Creation Panorama? "God said: 'Let the earth bring forth grass.' God said: 'Let the waters swarm with the moving creature that hath life.'" This "God said," this Eternal Word, who in the beginning was with God and was God: this "God said" of Moses and "God Word" of John—this it was who on the Third Day spoke life-givingly, germinatingly; and, lo, in a way perhaps forever inscrutable to us, the Immaterial took on itself the material, the life organized itself into the body. G. D. B.

All that God does is in prosecution of a plan, an eternal idea come to utterance. The tree ripens to the grade of a purpose that was ripe before the tree, and before the Third Day. It is all one whether we say that the plan is deposited in the seed, or that God builds the plant each moment against the pattern of His thought, as the mason lays bricks close to the plumb-line. It all sums up into the same result. There are no planless seeds, no purposeless scions. They follow a plan. Nature works from a copy. C. H. P.

# Section 14.

## FOURTH, FIFTH, AND HALF OF SIXTH, DAYS.

GENESIS 1 : 14–25.

14 AND God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the
15 night ; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years : and let them be for
16 lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth : and it was so. And God made the two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the
17 night : *he made* the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light
18 upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the
19 darkness : and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life,
21 and let fowl fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kinds, and every winged fowl after its kind : and God saw that it was
22 good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the
23 seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creep-
25 ing thing, and beast of the earth after its kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the ground after its kind : and God saw that it was good.

**14–19.** On the FOURTH DAY, the *Sun* and *Moon* were seen in the firmament of heaven. The fact of their previous creation is involved in the stability of the earth as a member of the solar system. It is not said that they were first created on the fourth day ; and of the stars, many of which must have existed myriads of years before their light reached the earth, it is simply said, "He made the stars also," not *when* He made them. The "fourth day" seems to mark the period during which the air was cleared of its thick vapors so that the heavenly bodies became visible. Stress is laid on their *ruling* as well as *lighting* the day and night. God said :—"Let them be for *signs*, and for *seasons*, and for *days* and *years*." They were designed, as they have ever since been used, to mark out the periods of human life ; to inculcate the great lesson that "to everything there is a *season*, and a *time* to every purpose under the heaven." P. S.——**14. He made two lights.** The original word for "made" is not the same as that which is rendered "create." It is a term frequently employed to signify *constituted*, *appointed*, set for a particular purpose or use. As the rainbow was *made* or constituted a sign, though it might have existed before, so the sun, moon, and stars may be said to have been made or set as lights in the firmament on the fourth day though actually called into existence previously. *Bush.*——**Lights.** Luminaries, or *light-bearers*, spoken of lamps and candlesticks (Ex. 25 : 6 ; Num. 4 : 9, 16). The narrative only tells what sun, moon, and stars are in relation to the earth. When the clouds and mists are dispelled from its surface, the seas confined within their boundaries, and the first vegetation springs up ; then the sky is cleared up, the sun, moon, and stars appear and assume their natural functions, marking days and nights, seasons and years ; and God makes or appoints them, the sun to rule the day, and the moon to rule the night. E. H. B.

The astronomy which deals especially with the physical nature and structure of the heavenly bodies as they are made known to us by the spectroscope and improved telescope, testifies that the sun and planets have all had a beginning. It even ventures to attempt to fix the date of the sun's beginning. "We may say," writes Professor Langley, "with something like awe at the meaning to which science points, that the whole past of the sun cannot have been over eighteen million years ; and its whole future radiation cannot last so much more. Its probable life is covered by about thirty million years. No reasonable allowance for the fall of meteors, or for all other known causes of supply, could possibly raise the whole term of its existence to sixty million years.

This is substantially Professor Young's view." *Armstrong.*——**The stars also.** The purpose of the sacred narrative being to describe the adaptation of the earth to the use of man, no account is taken of the nature of the stars, as suns or planets, but merely as signs in the heavens. The words in the text may be a kind of parenthesis, not assigning the special time of the creation of the stars. E. H. B.

The sun and moon were certainly made to give light upon the earth, and to *rule* the earth's seasons, whatever other designs may have been in their creation, or their appointment with reference to our own world. The interpretation does not demand it, and yet we may extend the same view to the stars. The light they give the earth could hardly have been in the writer's mind at all, but the other use may have been intended. They rule the seasons and the years; that is, they regulate our knowledge of them; and in the early ages of the world, were almost the only means for this end. They furnished the rule or canon by which they were determined. The first nations had no other almanac than the rolling heavens. Spring and summer, ploughing, sowing, and reaping time, were regulated by the rising and setting of certain constellations. Their use in this respect is referred to, not only by the Greek and Latin poets, but also in the Bible. "Canst thou bring out Mazzaroth in its seasons?" The "bands of Orion" are the iron chains of the wintry frosts and storms; the "sweet influences of Pleiades" represent the return of the genial vernal season, and of that reviviscence of nature of which the heliocentric rising of this beautiful constellation was the well-known rule or signal. Let astronomy be carried ever so far theoretically, the great *practical uses* of the stars to us will continue to be the accurate determination of the year, the regulation of the seasons, and the safe navigation of ships. For these uses, therefore, if not created, they were at least appointed, and *revealed* to our earth. T. L.

**Divide the day from the night.** That we may sleep and wake at healthful intervals, the Framer of our bodies and Father of our spirits has mercifully divided the day from the night; at every sunset dropping the curtains of His evening, and so inviting to repose; at every sunrise lifting the curtains of His morning, and so inviting to labor! **For days and years.** In all ages of the world men have accepted the motions of the heavenly bodies as the measure of duration or time. It is these motions, these sunrises and sunsets, these new and full moons, these morning and evening stars, these transits of the meridian, which have enabled men to divide time into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, seasons, years, decades, centuries, millenniums. It is also to these motions of the heavenly bodies that we owe such words as dial, clock, chronometer, journal, Sabbath, anniversary, era, almanac, calendar, chronology, even that august word - History. Sun, moon, and stars are man's natural chronometer. G. D. B.

Without an accurate measurement of the day and year, there could be no chronology; without chronology there could be no history; without history there could be no national or generic experience; without such experience there could be no progress; and without progress there could be no civilization. Take away, then, all outward measures of time, and formed as we now are of soul and body, it would be like removing the regulator, or balance wheel, of the whole system. The inner as well as the outer machinery would run down. Our souls would become chaotic, our thoughts unregulated; our life a dream, in which past phenomena, present sensations, and future imaginations would be mingled in hopeless confusion. For the want of such a regulator, man with his boasted intellect would sink below all that is known of the condition of the savage. T. L.

The works of the first three days and the last three correspond with one another. On the first day is light created; on the fourth day, the lights in heaven: on the second, the visible heaven with the waters; on the fifth, the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air: on the third, the dry land, with its clothing of vegetation; on the sixth, the land animals and man—on the first three days the inanimate substances, on the last three the living inhabitants, are produced. In the vegetable world the dry land attains its destined purpose, as the animal world, and indeed the whole creation, attains its end in man. All the following history is written only for *man;* and therefore the sun, moon, and stars, and the whole host of heaven, appear only as lights in the firmament of heaven. Of the inhabitants of heaven nothing is told us. *Gerl.*

THE FIFTH DAY. *Verses* 20–23.

**21. Created.** The word *bara* is used for the second time. On the first day a new admission of light into a darkened region is expressed by the word "be." On the second day a new disposition of the air and the water is described by the verbs "be" and "make." These indicate a modification of that which already existed. On the third day no verb is directly applied to

the act of divine power. This agency is thus understood, while the natural changes following are expressly noticed. In the fourth the words "be," "make," and "give" occur, where the matter in hand is the manifestation of the heavenly bodies and their adaptation to the use of man. In these cases it is evident that the word "create" would have been only improperly or indirectly applicable to the action of the Eternal Being. Here it is employed with propriety ; as the animal world is something new and distinct summoned into existence.

**22. Blessed them.** We are brought into a new sphere of creation on this day, and we meet with a new act of the Almighty. To bless is to wish, and, in the case of God, to will some good to the object of the blessing. The blessing here pronounced upon the fish and the fowl is that of abundant increase. M.——The word translated "moving creature," is the noun of the verb which in the same verse is rendered "to bring forth abundantly." Thus we see, that the astonishing fecundity with which they were endowed, is the prevalent idea of this description. Indeed, there is no phrase in human language in which, both by noun and verb, this idea could be more forcibly expressed than in the Hebrew original. And yet all language fails to convey an idea of the amazing extent of that "abundance" in bringing forth, with which these creatures were endowed on the day of their creation. *Kit.*

*According to Moses, plants and animals, with the exception of man, were not brought into being as single individuals, or as pairs at the most.* but when God spake He said : "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures." The result of such a work of creation was at once to people the air, the earth, and seas with many individuals or pairs of every species intended to inhabit them. To such a creation as this the fossiliferous rocks testify. Not at one point on the earth's surface only does a particular species appear, but at many points at the same time, and these points far distant from each other. *Armstrong.*——The earliest life was a long marine era, and the geologist, Le Conte, unconsciously echoes the very words of the Scripture when he says that the "early seas literally swarmed with living beings," beginning in the Cambrian,—and that 10,074 species have been found in the Silurian rocks alone. Sea life was the first main exhibition. And a mighty exhibition it was. For following close upon these Silurian species, and in fact beginning there, came the vast outburst of fishes that fill the Old Red Sandstone, or Devonian, so full. But "the winged creature," says the narrative, was to fly "over the face" (Hebrew) of heaven. And in this same Devonian series they begin with the ephemeris — Platephemera antiqua — of five inches spread of wings and two other species of neuroptera, expanding in the Carboniferous into a dozen other known species, one with a seven-inch spread, and culminating in the Jurassic and onward, with those many kinds of monstrous winged creatures, Pterosaurs or flying lizards—some of them extending their wings twenty-five feet from tip to tip, and well-nigh darkening the face of the sky—followed at length or accompanied by the true bird with feathers—the archæopteryx, also of the Jurassic, and by numerous species in the Cretaceous. But still another mark of this wonderful era were the great monsters of sea and land, the "stretched out" creatures. A singular description ; and a marvellous fulfilment does science record. Huge reptiles and amphibians, in vast variety. The world offers, at the present time, of living species, not more than six species fifteen feet in length, the largest of them not longer than twenty-five ; but then, from the Carboniferous through the Cretaceous periods, not less than one hundred and seventy-five known species, ranging from twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, to eighty feet in length, and one—the titanosaur of the Jurassic—a hundred feet in length and at least thirty feet in height. S. C. B.

**20, 21. Moving creature that hath life—living creature that moveth.** The appearance of all these forms, so infinitely various, of organic life, animal and vegetable, is attributed in Genesis to a series of Divine commands : "*and God said,*"—without, however, thereby either denying or even omitting expressly to notice the instrumentality of natural agents, as witness the expression : "*let the waters bring forth, . . . let the land bring forth.*" "*And God said,*"—there we see the principle that life alone is capable of begetting life. "Let the *earth*, . . . let the *waters* bring forth," —there we see the co-operation of Nature freely granted. *Godet.*——The physical laws may explain the inorganic world ; the biological law may account for the development of the organic ; but of the point where they meet, of the strange border-land between the dead and the living, science is silent. It is as if God had placed everything in earth and heaven in the hands of nature, but had reserved a point at the genesis of life for His direct appearing. *Drummond.*

All life, vegetable or animal, has for its starting-point the organic cell ; that is a fact which no man of science now disputes. But whence comes the cell itself? Is it the result of some happy combination of the elements of inorganic matter? or is it a sudden apparition in the midst of this,—a phenomenon entirely inexplicable without the act of a creator? *Godet.*——A minute examination has not, up to this time, discovered any power capable of originating life but life itself. Inanimate matter cannot become living except under the influence of matter already living. This is a fact in science

which seems to me as well ascertained as the law of gravitation. And I am ready to accept as an article of faith in science, valid for all time and in all space, *that life is produced by life, and only by life. Wm. Thompson.*

In all departments of philosophy, human curiosity is stopped, at an earlier or at a later stage, by an impassable barrier—it meets what is inscrutable. The constitution of the elements in the material world is inscrutable ; the gravitating force, and the principle of chemical affinity—the nature of light, and the principle of vegetable life—these things are utterly inscrutable : so also is the principle of animal life ; and so, in like manner, but not more so, is mind. At all these points alike, and as to each of them for the same reasons, we reach a limit which the human mind has never yet passed. I. T.

The doctrine that God created plants and animals in the beginning, "after their kind," has prevailed for three thousand years, from Moses until now, among the best, noblest, and wisest of men. It has been no crude fancy of ignorant peasants alone. Among its firm believers are all the prophets and all the apostles, most of the Greek philosophers, and Christian divines and men of science for fifteen centuries, the intellectual lights and standard-bearers of the leading nations of the earth. It includes among its disciples and adherents nearly all the great names, like Bacon, Kepler, Boyle, and Newton, by whom the chief advances of modern science have been made. Its true birthplace is in no flint-weapon manufactory, or bone-cavern —in an "era of profoundest darkness." It is in thick darkness of a very opposite kind, when Moses, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—the foremost, wisest, and noblest of all living men, drew near to the presence of Jehovah, talked with Him face to face in the holy mount as a man speaketh with his friend, and received from Him those messages which have enlightened and cheered the minds and hearts of sinful men through every later age of the world's history. *Birks.*

*According to Moses, at their creation special provision was made that each several kind of plant and animal should continue its kind by natural generation.* On this point science, long at variance with the Mosaic cosmogony, is now in harmony therewith. In the higher forms of plant and animal life, that the offspring was the product of a parent like itself has been long known and universally admitted. That this same law obtains among the lower orders, even the lowest, science has now demonstrated. *Armstrong.*——

Seven times is the phrase, "*after his (or their) kind,*" repeated, in four verses. Like the previous, solemn iteration of the same phrase in the story of the genesis of the plants, it almost stands like a prophetic *caveat* against the modern hypothesis of the mutability of species. Alike according to Moses and the observed facts of nature, the tree, whose seed is in itself, bears fruit after its kind ; the fish of the sea bears fishes after its kind ; the bird of the air bears birds after its kind ; the beast of the land bears beasts after its kind. G. D. B.

The record in Genesis sets forth that God created grass, herb, and then fruit tree ; "each after his kind ;" also reptiles, fish, fowl and land-animals, each "after his kind ;" and finally man "in the image of God." Over against this the modern theory (of Darwin) holds that all the animals of our globe "have descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number ;" and moreover, that man has in this respect no pre-eminence above the beasts, but has descended in the same line with them from some one of the four or five progenitors of the great animal kingdom. More still the author says in the same connection—"Analogy would lead me one step further, viz. to the belief that *all animals and plants* have descended from some one prototype." Not merely does he build upon assumed facts where no known facts are—which is building upon nothing—but where no facts *can be*, which is building not merely upon negatives but upon impossibilities. There is no room for his assumed facts where he locates them. If Geology proves anything it proves that vegetable and animal life commenced on our planet as soon as the planet was ready and *not sooner*, and that we have the remains of the earliest living organisms in the oldest fossil-bearing rocks. His scheme is therefore conditioned upon impossibilities and must be false. That plant life shades off by almost imperceptible stages till it comes so near to the lowest forms of animal life that the dividing line is scarcely if at all perceptible, no scientist disputes. But the ultimate reason for this remarkable fact is not to facilitate the transit of generations from the one province to the other. Of such transit there is not the first shade of evidence. The reason is that the Great Author of nature out of his infinite resources has *filled both kingdoms perfectly full of life-forms* so that no territory between their respective domains lies unoccupied. It is simply a fecundity of life-forms or species, analogous to the fecundity of living representatives under most of these species- all alike

traceable to the infinite resources of the Creator's wisdom and power. H. C.

First Half of the Sixth Day. *Verses* 24, 25.

**24, 25.** The waters now are peopled ; the air is peopled ; and terrestrial animals alone are wanting. Accordingly, on the sixth day, God is described as resuming his creative work, in the words :—"Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind." The term "living creature," seems to be merely a *collective* designation of the animals which are there indicated according to their kind. Under the term of "cattle," are included the ruminant herbivora, generally gregarious and capable of domestication. The "beasts of the earth" are the carnivora or beasts of prey in their various kinds. The name by which they are designated comes from a word signifying "life" or "living," and is well suited to the vivacious, active, and vigorous character which they display in comparison with the animals which crop the herb of the field. Under the remaining class, rendered by "creeping thing," we have not only the minor quadrupeds that seem to creep rather than walk, and such as creep on many feet, but all that glide along the surface of the soil—the serpents, annelides, etc. The idea throughout this classification is that of *creeping*. *Kit.*

The *fiat of the fifth day* reads : "Let the waters bring forth abundantly." The words which follow describe the lower orders of animals, or the Invertebrates, together with all Vertebrates excepting Mammals (or quadrupeds and man). The *fiat of the first half of the sixth day* begins with "Let the earth bring forth," and the words that follow describe the Mammals, the division of Vertebrates of which Man is the head. The succession in the living tribes given in the chapter is : (1) Plants (third day) ; (2) Invertebrates and the lower Vertebrates (fifth day) ; (3) Mammals, or the higher Vertebrates (first half of the sixth day) ; (4) Man, the head of Mammals (second half of the sixth day). Science might say that the principles of zoological classification would have been conformed to more closely if the work of the fifth day had ended with the Invertebrates, leaving all the Vertebrates to the sixth day. But this arrangement, viewed in the light of the philosophy of history, is no improvement ; since the record, like the rest of the Bible, has special reference to Man, in whom is the consummation of all history. The sixth day's work includes only that particular division of Vertebrates, to which Man himself belongs, whose common characteristic, that of suckling their young, is, through the feelings of subjection, reverence and affection it occasions, of the highest value as a means of binding child to parent, man to man, and man to his Maker. *Dana.*

*The Mosaic cosmogony presents us with a certain order of creation*—viz. : (1) "Grass, herbs, and trees"—*i.e.*, the vegetable kingdom, and this before the sun, moon, and stars were "set in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth ;" (2) fishes, including all the numerous inhabitants of the waters, together with "great sea-monsters," and "birds," or flying creatures, including insects ; (3) "cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth." Plants alone are capable of feeding directly upon inorganic matter. Animals, although the ultimate composition of their food is the same with that of plants, are incapable of digesting that food until it has undergone the preliminary organization which it acquires in assuming a vegetable form. *Armstrong.*——The most important function of the plant in the economy of nature is, with the aid of the sun's light, to turn inorganic into organic matter, and thus prepare food for the animal. Nothing else in nature does this important work. The animal cannot do it, and starves in the midst of an abundance of the materials needed for the building up of its body. The plant, therefore, is the indispensable basis of all animal life ; for though animals partially feed upon each other, ultimately the organic matter they need must come from the plant. *Guyot.*——Matter is brought into being. It is rudimental. The Holy Ghost—whose special province is process, evolution, organization—broods over the elemental abyss. There are dividings and combinings, and, at length, there is a becoming of light, with (doubtless) its kindred agents, such as heat, electricity, magnetism. Processes go on, and the atmosphere is constituted. The new agents become additional forces in the great laboratory ; and there results the mineral kingdom, with its gradations of rocks, clays, chemical compounds, and crystalline formations. The mineral kingdom is a preparation for higher planes of being. From the organizing processes of the brooding Spirit the floral world has a becoming. All that have gone before have been made tributary to this. It takes them up and assimilates them, transforming them into living organisms of root, and trunk, and bough, and frond, and flower, and fruit, and seed. The vegetable system is a prophecy of something higher. It has scant meaning if it is to find its end in itself. In due time the animal world appears. It gath-

ers up into itself the elements of all below it, and exalts them into the more complex and nobler organisms of flesh and blood, bone and sinew, nerve and brain, sensation, instinct, affection, and will. *An.*

The world is to be regarded throughout as being, in respect to its foundation, the act of God, or *creation;* according to its development, *nature;* according to its appearance, *cosmos;* and according to the plastic life-principle lying at its base, it is *æon.* T. L.

## Section 15.

### SUGGESTIONS OF THE CREATIVE HISTORY.

If by the sagacity of one infernal mind, a single planet has been seduced from its allegiance, and brought under the ascendancy of him who in the Scriptures is called the god of this world, and if the errand on which the Redeemer came was to destroy the works of the devil, then let this planet have all the littleness which astronomy has assigned to it—call it, what it is, one of the smaller islets which float on the ocean of immensity—it has become the theatre of such a competition as may have all the desires and all the energies of a divided universe embarked upon it. It involves in it other objects than the single recovery of our species. It decides higher questions—it stands linked with the supremacy of God. To an infidel ear, all this may carry the sound of something wild and visionary along with it; but though only known through the medium of revelation, after it is known who can fail to recognize its harmony with the great lineaments of human experience? Who does not recognize in these facts much that goes to explain why our planet has taken so conspicuous a position in the foreground of history? *Chalmers.*

——As Judea was the least and most despised country of the earth, and yet "the *glorious* land" (De. 11 : 16, 41); as Bethlehem was least among the thousands of Judah (Mic. 5 : 2) and yet the Sun of Righteousness arose there (Mal. 4 : 2), so our solar system is the Judea of the universe, and our insignificant earth the Bethlehem of this holy land—poor and despised, yet precious above all. When at first Jehovah founded the earth, the morning stars looked on with songs of praise; when the eternal Word full of grace and truth, left the throne of glory to clothe Himself with our nature, the hosts of heaven burst forth into this hymn: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*" Again when the Son of man shall return in the clouds, surrounded with all the glory of his eternal Godhead, to renew heaven and earth and to consummate all things, shall those messengers of his power and goodness, in whose presence even now here is joy at every new progress of the kingdom of God upon earth, behold with rapturous delight the unfolding of that mystery of godliness, into which they now desire to look, and in louder tones and loftier strains shall they enchoir their never-ending Hallelujah. *Kurtz.*

#### 1. *Summary Points.*

These lessons emerge unforced from the record. That creation did not create itself. That matter is not God's coeval, but his creature and servant. That God only had no beginning, and that all things else began to be by his will. That the whole universe is one harmonious system, the work of one God; the projection of his thought, the transcript of his plan. That such plan bore the stamp of a preconceived progress; and evolved itself in orderly successions, stage after stage, toward a foreseen terminus or goal. That each form or type of life was made "after its kind," and owes its characteristic endowments to creative ordination, not to fortuitous development. That man has not developed into what he is from some bestial type, but holds his prerogatives as a gift direct from the Almighty. That we owe no worship to nature, and all worship to God. *G. Rorison.*

In this account of the creation of plants and animals we note the following particulars: (1) It is a creation out of pre-existing materials, and not, like that of the universe, out of nothing; (2) the origin of life, like the origin of matter, is traced directly to God himself; (3) that special provision is made that each several kind of plant and animal shall continue its kind by natural generation; (4) that plants and animals are brought into being not singly, nor in pairs, but in great numbers; and (5) that this creation is said to have been effected in a certain order. *Armstrong.*——The history is that of creative ascent from dead matter to life; from invertebrate life to that of the backbone; from the life of the backbone in the fish-reptile series to that of the breast; from the life of the breast to that of the plenarily-endowed brain. *G. Rorison.*

1. Moses, who in his first sentence sets God's personality in clear relief against the universe

(which is not "evolved" out of, but "made" by him), keeps it distinct throughout from confusion with natural forces. 2. God, though put at the beginning, is not left there, having, as the Deists taught, "made a world, and standing apart to see it go." The work of creation is represented as progressive, and God is continually present and continually intervening, and according to our Lord's testimony he "worketh hitherto." 3. The successive entrance of the physical, the vital and the mental factors into the problem of the growing world is clearly recognized. But the divine intelligence is always put before and exalted above the divine power; "God said" before "God made." The order of creation also is teleologically and not genealogically determined. Grass and herb appear before beast and man, not to beget but to feed them. 4. The supposed continuity of development is broken across by distinctly epochal divisions, across whose border, whatever may transpire within them, the genetic lines do not extend. It is worthy of passing notice, as hinting of what we possibly have yet to learn of the significance of the sacred record, that fishes, birds and reptiles—which are so strangely isolated from other creatures and grouped together as the product of "the waters" in a single day—are now said to be correspondingly united and isolated by a unique physiological circumstance. They are literally "of one blood," the blood disk in them all being oval, while in other creatures it is round. The agency of second causes is uniformly recognized and no "flashing of atoms" into perfect form is hinted at. But it is not the vegetable world, but "the waters" that bring forth aquatic creatures, nor does the Creator "form man" of the "beasts of the earth," but of the "dust" of the earth. There is in each case a distinct return to the elemental, and a creative word. *J. B. Thomas.*

The narrative is in keeping, as far as it goes, with the facts of astronomy and geology, of botany, zoology and ethnology. It agrees with the cosmogonies of all nations, so far as these are founded upon a genuine tradition and not upon the mere conjectures of a lively fancy. Finally, it has the singular and superlative merit of drawing the diurnal scenes of that creation to which our race owes its origin in the simple language of common life, and presenting each transcendent change as it would appear to an ordinary spectator standing on the earth. It was thus sufficiently intelligible to primeval man, and remains to this day intelligible to us, as soon as we divest ourselves of the narrowing preconceptions of our modern civilization. M.

The whole record shows remarkable freedom from merely local or national peculiarities. The Euphrates and the Mesopotamian plains influence the Babylonian cosmogony; the Nile gives character to the Egyptian; sunny slopes and contrasting heights determine the Grecian; and valley gloom, forest depths, and wintry storms, the Scandinavian. It is easy to trace the physical basis of distinct cosmogonies. The bases themselves may vary, but their connection with religious beliefs is always uniform. Even *national* myths about creation have not preserved their original cast. They have varied with the history of the people. While the *religious* tendency of the national mind, and the traditional basis as to the mere fact of creation, have remained, the form of the cosmogony has been completely changed; it has been so moulded as to suit the different physical conformation and other varied conditions of the new country in which the people have settled. But no such process or influence is ever traceable in the Bible account. There is nothing local; nothing contingent; nothing dependent on the traditions of any country; not a line which indicates any such antecedent influence. *W. Fraser.*——In all the other cosmogonies we discover the peculiarities of nation, of age, of partial modes of thinking. In the Mosaic there is nothing national. It is altogether separate from the Jewish national history. It stands away back of the earliest annals in which their national characteristics begin to make themselves manifest. Thus, standing at the head of all history, it belongs to all nations. It is no more distinctively Jewish, as far as the known history of this people is concerned, than it is Egyptian, or Greek, or Babylonian, unless we regard as Jewish peculiarities the grandeur and purity of its theism. T. L.

The cosmogony of the Babylonians represents the beginning of things as in darkness and water, where nondescript animals, hideous monsters, half-men and half-beasts, appeared, and after this, a woman—who personates the creative spirit or principle—was split into two parts, and the heaven and the earth produced by the division. Then Belus, the supreme divinity, cut off his own head, and his blood trickling down and mingling with the dust of the earth, produced human creatures having intelligence and spiritual life. According to the Phœnician cosmogony, that which first appeared was an ether or a mist diffused in space. Then arose the wind, the representative of motion, and from this agitation proceeded a spiritual God, from whom again in turn proceeded an egg—which is so common a feature of the cosmogonies of antiquity—the division of which, as in the case of the woman, produced the heavens and the earth. The noise of thunder awakened beings into spiritual life. The Egyptian cosmogony was in general harmony with the Phœnician. Its principal divinity was Ptah, the world-creating power, who shaped the cosmic egg, which again appears here, as in the Phœnician. There followed from Ptah a long succession of gods, with various offices and powers—solar, telluric, psychical—from whom at length proceeded demigods, and from these again heroes, until the link of our common humanity was established. According to Grote, "the mythical world of the Greeks opens with the gods, anterior as well as superior to man; it gradually descends, first to heroes, and next to the human race. Along with the gods are found various monstrous natures, ultra-human and extra-human, who cannot with propriety be called gods, but who partake with gods and man in the attributes of free-will, conscious agency, and susceptibility of pleasure and pain—such as the Harpies the Gorgons, the Sirens, the Sphinx, the Cyclops, the Centaurs, etc." After violent contests among these gigantic

creatures and forces, there arises a stable government of Zeus, the chief among the gods. First appears Chaos, then the broad, firm, flat Earth, with deep and dark Tartarus below, and from these proceed various divinities and creatures, some grand and terrible, some simply monstrous; their relations to each other violate all notions of decency and morality; their wars and slaughters, their gross and abominable crimes, issue in successive creative products upon the earth, which terminate at last in the appearing of man. J. P. T.

The Biblical cosmogony is distinguished by the absence of everything fanciful and absurd, with which the others teem. The Biblical betrays nothing of a local or national character, whereas the others are indelibly stamped with them. The Biblical is characterized by correct and worthy conceptions of the Creator, the rest either ignore Divine interposition, ascribe eternity to matter, introduce some demiurgic principle, or exhibit a supreme Being in a way degrading, confused, and indistinct. The Biblical is simple, grand, and consistent, embodying all the truths in heathen cosmogonies, but free from their chaotic, grotesque, and self-contradictory representation. D. M.

The Mosaic account is a record of the steps by which God *made* the world. The Pagan myths are, for the most part, *theogonies* as well as cosmogonies,—that is, they give the generation of the universe, including Gods as well as men. They make us all the children of one mother. When we come to trace strictly the leading idea, plants, animals, men, and divinities, even the highest Gods, are all, in some way, developments from one unaided and eternal nature. The language of Pindar (Nem. vi.) would give the spirit of almost every cosmogony, but that of the Bible. "One race of Gods and men, from one mother breathe we all." And this mother is nature, or, as expressed in the grosser form, the earth. Gods, indeed, are mentioned, "Gods many," and demigods in vast numbers, but the highest gods are only the older powers, the first-born of this universal parent. In this one respect, how immense the difference between all such mythologies and the Mosaic narrative! How irresistible the argument from this alone, that it must have had an origin, not only totally distinct from, but immeasurably above, them all. In the one, God is the supernatural *cause* as well as the supernatural governor of nature, in the others, the Divinity (if for convenience we retain the name), is only Nature's first-born, her highest or oldest development.

In whose mind was born this wondrous vision, in all the rigid truthfulness of its unity and consistency? Whence this remarkable order of ideas so different from what some would regard as the natural offspring of that simple, unphilosophical, unscientific age? Whence this peculiar chronological aspect, this succession of periods, rising from the chaotic, the unformed, through such regular and harmonious gradations into higher and higher forms of life? What is there like it, or to be at all compared with it, in any mythology on earth? There it stands, high above them all, and remote from them all, in its air of great antiquity, in its unaccountableness, in its serene truthfulness, in its unapproachable sublimity, in that impress of divine majesty and ineffable holiness which even the unbelieving neologist has been compelled to acknowledge, and by which every devout reader feels that the first page in Genesis is forever distinguished from any mere human production. T. L.

2. *Order and Organization, Law and Adaptation, testify that the Universe is a Creation of God*

Creation is the production of *order*. What a simple but comprehensive and pregnant principle is here! Order is the law of all intelligible existence. Everything that exists, that has been made by God or produced by man, of any permanent value, is only some manifestation of order in its thousandfold possibilities. Everything that has a shape is a manifestation of order. Well ordered stones make architecture; well-ordered words make good writing; well-ordered facts make science. Disorder makes nothing at all, but unmakes everything. Stones in disorder produce ruins; an ill-ordered social condition is decline, revolution, or anarchy; ill-ordered ideas are absurdity; ill-ordered facts are chaos. *J. S. Blackie.*

Astronomy testifies to a wonderful order pervading the universe, mathematical in its accuracy, in so far as the bodies astronomy has to deal with are concerned; zoology and botany testify to an equally wonderful order prevailing throughout the kingdom of organic nature—a wonderful adaptation of living creatures to their environments, and of the parts and organs of these living creatures to their functions, which are utterly inconsistent with the idea of their being the product of chance. G. D. A.——The conception of the constancy of the order of nature has become a dominant idea of modern thought. To persons familiar with the facts upon which that conception is based, and competent to estimate their significance, it has ceased to be conceivable that chance should have any place in the universe, or that events should depend upon any but the natural sequence of cause and effect. *Huxley.*

If there be an order and harmony, there must be an orderer, one that "made the earth by His power, established the world by His wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by His discretion" (Jer. 10 : 12). Order being the effect, cannot be the cause of itself. Order is the disposition of things to an end, and is not intelligent, but implies an intelligent orderer; and therefore it is as certain that there is a God as it is certain there is order in the world. Order is an effect of reason and counsel; this reason and counsel must have its residence in some being before this order was fixed. The things ordered are always distinct from that reason and counsel whereby they are ordered; and also after it, as the effect is after the cause. No man begins a piece of work but he hath the model of it in his own mind; no man builds a house or makes a watch but he hath the idea or copy of it in his own head. This beautiful world bespeaks an idea of it or a model, since there is such a magnificent wisdom in the make of each creature, and the proportion of one creature to another; this model must be before the world, as the pattern is always before th-

thing that is wrought by it. This therefore must be in some intelligent and wise agent, and this is God. *Charnock.*

Kant defines *organization* "a product of nature in which all the parts are mutually ends and means." Hence, every part of an organized structure is necessarily indicative of wisdom; but when our view is extended to the boundless varieties of organized life, we are convinced that the resources of creative wisdom are boundless; they can have no limitation. Every variety of life has an organization of its own, from which arise the numerous types of being, scientifically divided into classes, orders, genera, and species. The diversified forms of being are astounding. Botanical science has arranged and classified from eighty to a hundred thousand species of plants; new discoveries are continually increasing the number; and to these must be added the extinct species embedded in geological deposits. Zoology has numbered upward of a thousand species of quadrupeds, five thousand species of birds, an equal number of fishes, a hundred thousand species of insects; while of reptiles, shell-fish, crustaceans, worms, radiates, zoophytes, and animalcules, the numerous species defy the industry of man to ascertain. In these multifarious species, what diversity in size, from the microscopic plant to the gigantic pine, from the monad that finds a world in a drop of water to the iguanodon and the whale! What diversity in shape, in colors, in habits, in instincts, in physical conformation! The earth, the air, the ocean, are crowded with life, and the varieties of organization are as numerous as the conditions under which life is capable of subsisting. It is as if the Creator had called these endless varieties of being into existence for the purpose of displaying the inexhaustible opulence of His wisdom, of showing to His intelligent creatures that the resources of His knowledge and power are absolutely infinite. *W. Cooke.*

Matter—the lowest order—is a general substratum for all the others. Aided and fashioned by the principle of life, it performs higher functions in the plant and animal. Matter, plant life and animal life perform higher intellectual and moral functions under the guidance of the human soul. Every one of the lower powers, associated with a higher element, becomes instrumental: the higher as a cause, the lower as a condition of existence, or as an instrument, both co-operating to a common progress. But after each of these factors has performed its part, something yet remains to be explained. The result, varied as it may be, is never arbitrary confusion, but order and beauty; and this shows the constant and indispensable supervision of God over his work. *Guyot.*

The mystery of the universe and the meaning of God's world are shrouded in hopeless obscurity, until we learn to feel that all *laws suppose a lawgiver*, and that all working involves a Divine energy. *Maclaren.*——A law supposes an agent and a power; for it is the mode, according to which the agent proceeds, the order according to which the power acts. Without the presence of such an agent, of such a power, conscious of the relations on which the law depends, producing the effects which the law prescribes, the law can have no efficacy, no existence. Hence we infer that the intelligence by which the law is ordained, the power by which it is put into action, must be present, at all times and in all places, where the effects of the law occur; that thus the knowledge and the agency of the Divine Being pervade every portion of the universe, producing all action and passion, all permanence and change. The laws of matter are the laws which He, in his wisdom, prescribes to his own acts; His universal presence is the necessary condition of any course of events; His universal agency the only organ of any efficient force. *Whewell.*——The laws of nature can no more administer themselves than the laws of the land. Just as the laws of the land imply the existence of an authority, a magistrate, who will act on them and assert them, so the laws of nature bear witness to an unseen force, or power, or person, who imposes and enforces them, rewarding those who obey, punishing those who violate them. This power we call God. We know of no adequate source of universal law save the Maker of heaven and earth. So that our first and simplest conception of God, the conception we derive from the facts of the physical universe, is that He is the source of physical law. . . . Science knows of no pantheon. There must be one dominant and supreme power which rules over all. And this power, which sits behind the laws of nature, must be inconceivably great and wise. If it were not wise and strong beyond our reach of thought, the universe, instead of being a harmony of invariable and beneficent sequences, would break into ruinous and irremediable confusion; disaster would tread on the heels of disaster, and the end would be destruction and death. What, then, shall we call this power? how name it? *We* call it God. Others, hiding their ignorance in unmeaning and self-contradictory phrases, may call it "the stream of tendency," ignoring the fountain from which the stream flows. *We* say that law implies a lawgiver, that power implies a person from whom it proceeds; and we worship God as the *sole* source of the forces and laws of nature. *Brit. Quar.*

The *laws* of nature are not to be confounded with *causes*. There can be no laws of a thing until the thing itself is caused or made. They presuppose such causes, or volitions, of which they are the effects or manifestations. In other words, they are the rules by which God is pleased to regulate the phenomena of nature. The existing *form* of the physical constitution, therefore, is entirely dependent on the will of God. Every one of its laws, when creation is viewed on a comprehensive scale, is, for anything we know, as strictly provisional as any of the temporary enactments of the Jewish ritual. J. H.

If it be a fact of universal experience that man's will, while unable to suspend or alter a single law of nature, is yet able to change and guide the succession of events to an incalculable extent, we cannot reasonably think that the Creator of man has less power over the course of the world. If we believe in Him at all, we must credit Him with the ability to exert, if so He wills, a directing influence over the course

of events without the necessity of suspending or abrogating any one of the laws which have been impressed by Him on nature. The touch of his hand cannot be less efficacious than the touch of man's hand. Providence may guide and rule without in the least degree violating natural law and order. *B. Maitland.*——I exercise a discretionary providence within a limited scope. I may make my field an orchard, a desert, or a wilderness. Possessed of wealth, I may send with it comfort and joy through a score of else wretched homes; or, by my penuriousness, may make my own home cheerless and desolate. There is here no infraction of general laws; but I insert my own will so as to make these laws do my bidding. Can God's power be less than man's? On the other hand, may not man's action upon nature under law interpret God's action upon nature under the laws which He has made supreme, and which He no more transcends than He suffers man to violate them? Man disturbs not the normal relation between cause and effect, or antecedent and consequent: no more does the Divine Providence. But as man, to effect his purposes, so lays hold on the course of Nature as to modify the current of events, yet without deranging the laws of causation; in like manner may the Divine will interpose with reference to man's deserts or needs, so that the laws of causation shall be undisturbed, and yet events shall flow in an entirely different channel from that which they would have taken had man's deserts or needs been other than they are. *Peabody.*——If we mean by law the observed regularity with which God works in nature as in grace, then, in our contact with law, we are dealing, not with a brutal, unintelligent, unconquerable force, but with the free will of an intelligent and moral Artist, who works, in his perfect freedom, with sustained and beautiful symmetry. Where is the absurdity of asking Him to hold his hand or to hasten his work? He to whom we pray may be trusted to grant or to refuse a prayer, as may seem best to the highest Wisdom and the truest Love. If He really works at all; if something that is neither moral nor intelligent has not usurped his throne—it is certain that "the thing that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself." H. P. L.

So far from general laws being able, as superficial thinkers imagine, to produce the beautiful *adaptations* which are so numerous in nature, they are themselves the results of nicely balanced and skilful adjustments. So far from being simple, they are the product of many arrangements. They are not agencies, but ends contemplated by Him who adjusted the physical agencies which produced them. As such they become the rules of God's house, the laws of His kingdom; and whenever we see such laws, we see the certain traces of a Lawgiver. *McCosh.*——We are, by the discovery of the general laws of nature, led into a scene of wider design, of deeper contrivances, of more comprehensive adjustments. Final causes, if they appear driven further from us by such extension of our views, embrace us only with a vaster and more majestic circuit. Instead of a few threads connecting some detached objects they become a stupendous network which is wound round and round the universal frame of things. Our conviction that the artist works intelligently is not destroyed, though it may be modified and transferred when we obtain a sight of his tools. Our discovery of laws cannot contradict our persuasion of ends. *Whewell.*

So far as the management of the material universe is concerned, God has declared unmistakably that He has no favorites. He has given to material forces a law which cannot be broken. His sun shines on the evil and on the good, and His rain falls on the just and on the unjust. The great blessings of life come to us all alike. The cradle, and the mother's tenderness, and the mirth of boyhood, and the lover's joy, and old age, and the smile of children, and night and day, and seed-time, and harvest, and summer, and winter, are for the poor man quite as much as for the king. And we shall all be equal at the last—all classed according to life's natural ranks, fathers, sons, brothers, friends—not rich, nor wise, nor noble. There is in nature nothing provisional, nothing provincial. "The sun," says a wise writer, "smiles equally over Arctic wastes and over teeming cities, and glances alike from the sword of an Attila and from the crucifix of a Xavier." What science calls the uniformity of nature, faith accepts as the fidelity of God. It is thus that He disciplines us through obedience and patience, and rebukes the wild sophistry of temptation by irremediable decrees. We trust Him more because there is no devilish element in nature, no wild impulse rushing, with eruptions of curse and blessing, into space. And when we thus see nature making such superb provision for our joy in all the lavish prodigality of her manifold mysteries; when we see her steadily warning us against the causes of our misery and our degradation; when we see her rebuking, by her magnificent indifference, the petulances of our sorrow and the faithlessness of our despair; when we see her granting to us a splendid dominion over her elements by faithful obedience to her laws; when we see her constantly educing good out of evil; then we are glad and not angry that her steps are measured, her exceptions rare, her laws unchangeable. *Farrar.*

### 3. *Creation, not Evolution, the origin of living organisms, plant and animal.*

Though the narrative is, on the whole, singularly non-committal in regard to any specific scientific doctrine, there are a few points on which it is positive. It teaches that: 1. The primordial creation of matter, the creation of the system of life, and the creation of man, are three distinct creations. 2. They are not simultaneous, but successive. 3. God's action in the creation is constant. As already observed, each of these great orders of things is introduced by the word *bara*, so that Moses seemed to distinguish the three great groups of phenomena as distinct in essence. According to this, the evolution from one of these orders into the other—from matter into life, from animal life into the spiritual life of man—is impossible. *Guyot.*——Suppose the world to be in its condition of inorganic progress, we have no scientific ground for supposing that it could pass to a higher state, possessing living beings, by any

parturient powers within. Or if Life exists, we still get no hint as to the evolution of the four sub-kingdoms of animal life from a universal germ ; nor as to the origin of the Class-types, Order-family, or Genus-types, or those of Species, each of which is a distinct idea in the plan of creation. Nature, in fact, pronounces such a theory of evolution absolutely false. The perpetual presence of Mind, infinite in power, wisdom, and love, and ever acting, is manifest in the whole history of the past. *Dana.*

During the pre-Adamite periods, which were of enormous duration, the existing general laws of nature were in force, though the dispositions of inorganic nature were different in different periods, and the animals and plants of successive periods were also different from each other. The introduction of new species of animals and of plants, while indicating advance in the perfection of nature, does not prove spontaneous development, but rather creation. *Dawson.* ——Transmutation of species, unknown to experience, is equally unknown to geology. Type after type appears and disappears , but none melts into a something not itself. Each creature, throughout the long succession, comes in as it goes out and goes out as it came in. *G. Rorison.*——The geological record is imperfect. But, as Sir Rod-rick Murchison has long ago proved, there are parts of that record which are singularly complete, and in those parts we have the proofs of creation, without any indication of development. The Silurian rocks, as regards oceanic life, are perfect and abundant in the forms they have preserved, yet there are no fish. The Devonian Age followed tranquilly and without a break ; and in the Devonian sea suddenly fish appear –appear in shoals and in forms of the highest and most perfect type. There is no trace of links or transitional forms between the great class of mollusks and the great class of fishes. There is no reason whatever to suppose that such forms, if they had existed, can have been destroyed in deposits which have preserved in wonderful perfection the minutest organisms. So much for the past. As regards the present, organisms are known to reproduce life, but always life which is like their own. And if this likeness admits of degrees of difference, the margin of variety is not known to be ever broad enough for the foundation of a new species. That any organism can ever produce another which varies from itself in any truly specific character is an assumption not justified by any known fact. No organism is ever seen to exert such a power now. Many indications tend to show that all organisms have been equally incapable of modification since the earliest monuments of man. *Argyll.*

It has been said that at the starting-point of existence all plants and animals are alike. As a late writer puts it, "The apple which fell in Newton's garden, Newton's dog Diamond, and Newton himself began life at the same point." It is true, that with our best microscopes we have not yet been able to discover any structural difference in these first cellules of the apple, the dog, and the man. But the fact that the apple-cellule always develops into an apple, the dog-cellule into a dog, and the man-cellule into a man, furnishes irrefragable proof that there is a radical difference in these cellules, either in structure or in the nature of the vitality with which they are endowed, though our microscopes may not be able to discover it.

*This whole class of changes takes place under the law of variation of growth-development.* Co-ordinate with this law, we find another law limiting the range of these variations. In the case of the acorn, under the law of variation, it develops into the mature oak, and then the operation of the law, as a law of life, ceases. The oak dies, and by chemical agencies is resolved into its original elements. Its material falls back from its condition of organic matter to that of inorganic matter again. But before its death the mature oak had produced its acorns, and from these acorns other oaks grow just as the first oak did ; and so this whole series of changes is repeated time after time. The life-story of the silk-worm, the frog, man, and even the parasitic tape-worm in this particular is the same with that of the oak. The law of limitation in the case of growth-development may be thus stated : *Variation, extreme as it may be, never extends beyond the life of the individual plant or animal in which it occurs.* Growth-development runs a certain definite round, and then we are brought back to the same starting-point again. By growth-development an oak will never become anything but an oak, a silk-worm will never become anything but a silk-worm to the end of time. *Armstrong.*

*Competent Testimony.* Who ever recalls to mind the lamentable failure of all the attempts made very recently to discover a decided support for the *generatio æquivoca* in the lower forms of transition from the inorganic to the organic world, will feel it doubly serious to demand that this theory, so utterly discredited, should be in any way accepted as the basis of all our views of life. All really scientific experience tells us that life can be produced from a living antecedent only. *Virchow.*——In Bastian's experiments, after every expedient to secure sterility, life did appear inside in myriad quantity. Therefore, he argued, it was spontaneously generated. But the phalanx of observers found two errors in this calculation. Professor Tyndall repeated the same experiment, only with a precaution to insure absolute sterility suggested by the most recent science—a discovery of his own. He manipulated his experimental vessels in an atmosphere which, under the high test of optical purity - the most delicate known test--was absolutely germless. Here not a vestige of life appeared. He varied the experiment in every direction, but matter in the germless air never yielded life. The other error was detected by Mr. Dallinger. He found among the lower forms of life the most surprising and indestructible vitality. Many animals could survive much higher temperature than Dr. Bastian had applied to annihilate them. Some germs almost refused to be annihilated—they were all but fire-proof. These experiments have practically closed the question. A decided and authoritative conclusion has now taken its place in science. Spontaneous generation has had to be given up. And it is now recognized on every hand that life can only come from the touch of life. Huxley categorically announces

that the doctrine of Biogenesis, or life only from life, is "victorious along the whole line at the present day." And even while confessing that he wishes the evidence were the other way, Tyndall is compelled to say, "I affirm that no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life." *Drummond.*

We are in the presence of the one incommunicable gulf—the gulf of all gulfs—the gulf which Mr. Huxley's protoplasm is as powerless to efface as any other material expedient that has ever been suggested since the eyes of men first looked into it—the mighty gulf between death and life. *Stirling.*——Breeds (*i.e.*, varieties) among animals are the work of man; species were created by God. *Agassiz.*——Notwithstanding observations reaching back for thousands of years, and made on hundreds of species, we do not yet know a single example of intermediate species obtained by the crossing of animals belonging to different species. *Quatrefages.*——The founding of new forms by the union of different species, even when standing in close natural relation to each other, is absolutely forbidden by the sentence of sterility which Nature pronounces and enforces upon all hybrid offspring. And so it results that man has never seen the origin of any species. Creation by birth is the only kind of creation he has ever seen; and from this kind of creation he has never seen a new species come. *Argyll.*

In all this great museum there is not a particle of evidence of transmutation of species. Nine tenths of the talk of evolutionists is not founded on observation, and wholly unsupported by fact. Moreover, the talk of the great antiquity of man is of the same value. There is no such thing as a fossil man. This museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of these views. *Mr. Etheridge* (of the British Museum).——The doctrine of evolution, as held by a prominent school of German and English biologists, I regard as equally at variance with science, revelation, and common-sense, and destitute of any foundation in fact. *Dawson.*

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Man is not an ape transformed and perfected by some dim imperceptible fermentation of the elements of nature and by the operation of ages. This assumed explanation of the origin of the human species is a mere vague hypothesis, the fruit of an imagination ill comprehending the spectacle that nature presents, and therefore easily seduced to form ingenious conjectures. These their authors sow in the stream of events unknown and of time infinite, and trust to them for the realization of their dreams. The principle of the fundamental diversity and the permanence of species, firmly upheld by Cuvier, Flourens, Coste, Quatrefages, and by all exact observers of facts, remains dominant in science as in reality. *Guizot.*——Evolution cheats us with the semblance of a man without the reality. Shave and paint your ape as you may, clothe him and set him upon his feet, still he fails greatly of "the human form divine;" and so it is with him morally and spiritually as well. We have seen that he wants the instinct of immortality, the love of God, the mental and spiritual power of exercising dominion over the earth. *Dawson.*——The possession of intellect and conscience; the capacity for distinguishing between truth and error, right and wrong; the ability to communicate thought by language, and to originate the fine arts—painting, sculpture, architecture—and to start and carry forward all that is embraced in our modern civilization, to say nothing of anatomical differences, make between the ape and man not as wide a gulf, it may be, as that which separates between the living and the non-living, but a gulf as utterly impassable. *Armstrong.*

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Who creates or evolves? Whither do the atoms come, or go? These questions remain as before. Science has not found a substitute for God. And yet, in another sense, these questions are very different from before. Science has put them through its crucible. It took them from theology, and deliberately proclaimed that it would try to answer them. They are now handed back, tried, unanswered, but with a new place in theology and a new power with science. Science has attained, after this ordeal, to a new respect for theology. If there are answers to these questions, and there ought to be, theology holds them. And theology, likewise, has learned a new respect for science. In its investigations of these questions science has made a discovery. It has seen plainly that atheism is unscientific. It is a remarkable thing that, after trailing its black length for centuries across European thought, atheism should have had its doom pronounced by science. *H. Drummond.*

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## Section 16.

### GEOLOGICAL HISTORY AND THEORIES OF CREATIVE DAYS.

*The Geological History of the Earth.* The materials of the earth are so arranged that we can read its history. Beginning with the foundation, upon which the vast structure rests, we find that it is *granite* and the different ingredients of granite. Examining this underlying rock we discover no evidences of life during its formation. There are no remains of plants or animals of any kind. How long the matter of the globe remained after its creation before it took this form, even, we cannot tell. How long it remained bare, naked granite, we are totally ignorant. It must have been age upon age; for "of old he laid the foundations."

The formation next above this is called the *Silurian.* The rocks of this period are, chiefly, the sandstones, slates, and limestones. Including the older and newer formations, they are not less than thirty thousand feet in thickness. An examination of this layer will disclose fossil plants, and the fossil remains of the four great branches of the animal kingdom—the Radiates, typified in the star-fish and sun-fish ; the Mollusks, in the clam and land-snail ; the Articulates, represented by worms and insects ; and the Vertebrates, by fishes, birds, and mammals. The fish, however, is the only vertebrate which then existed. What is still more remarkable is, that, though we find more than a thousand different fossil species, and though there are three hundred thousand living species of the same classes now in the waters, yet not *one* can be found among those which at present swim the sea, or creep across the earth, that does not differ in its species from every one of those that lived, died, and were buried in the great Silurian Period.

The next page in this wonderful book is called the *Old Red Sandstone.* In the State of New York it is fourteen thousand feet thick. In it we find the remains of numerous plants, and the four branches of the animal kingdom, as in the last ; but, though there are a thousand different species, though the remains are such as to show that the waters of this period must have swarmed with life, still it may be safely stated that but *few*, if any, species of animal or plant found in the preceding, and that *none* found in the present age existed during the formation of the old red sandstone.

Next above this formation, we reach the age in which the coal we use to warm and light our dwellings was formed and deposited. It is called the *Carboniferous Period.* The growth of vegetation in this age transcends all calculation. Immense forests sprang up. The exuding sap, *i.e.*, petroleum, flowed down into the limestone and iron-cased vats or basins, and was there preserved. The undergrowth of the forests consisted of at least three hundred different varieties of fern. The sunlight was excluded from all those forests. The geologist, the chemist, and the botanist tell us they were never touched by an illuminating sunbeam. More than tropical heat extended to the polar regions. These are conditions the most perfectly adapted for vegetable development, but the most fatal to animal life. As we should expect, though the limestone and iron which constitute the introduction of this period abound in the remains of a great variety of land insects and reptiles, not one of any kind or class of air-breathing animals or insects can be found in the coal formation proper. But when the supplies had been stored up in vast quantities, when the carbon and poisons had been taken up from the atmosphere by the development of vegetation, to which, indeed, it owed its growth, then those ancient forests were suddenly checked in their development. They were sunk beneath the ocean, and stratum after stratum of sandstone and limestone were piled over that forgotten vegetation, hiding it for centuries, and pressing it, like a modern peat-press, into solid rock. That rock is our coal.

The next deposit above the coal is the *New Red Sandstone.* In this the poisons of the atmosphere having been absorbed, we again find the remains of air-breathing animals. The birds of the period especially claim our attention. They were found in such abundance that we may term it the Bird Epoch. They consisted of at least thirty-five different species : in some cases, of enormous size. They were rulers of the hills and vales of earth for centuries ; but, like every other race that had preceded them, they at length perished.

The next period is very properly called the Reptilian Age. Reptiles flourished at this date as vigorously as plants had in the coal period, and as the birds had in the age just preceding. There were at this time gigantic reptiles, seventy feet in length, which could walk the earth, swim the sea, or fly the air, equally well. But they met, at length, a sudden and total extinction, and left only their skeletons to acquaint us with the facts of their existence and nature.

Ages again pass, and new orders appear. They constitute what is called the *Chalk or Cretaceous* formation. If we could have visited the earth during the period of these deposits, we should have found it inhabited, century after century, by the minutest shell animals, many species of which are imperceptible without the aid of the microscope. It may properly be called the Shell-insect Age. How unlike the age of monster birds and reptiles which preceded ! Where is the development theory? But after these little animals had done their work,—after their accumulated remains had provided the world with its chalk, its marble, and the different varieties of carbonate of lime,—then their age and reign ceased.

We now approach comparatively near the earth's surface, and may begin to talk of *modern* times. Above the Cretaceous, lies the last of the Tertiary, or the Mammal deposits. Visiting the earth at this stage of its construction, the race of mammals would especially have attracted our attention and excited our surprise. "They agreed," says Cuvier, "neither specifically, nor even for the most part generically, with any hitherto discovered in the living creation." But during the entire age of magnificent forests and mighty mammals, the earth at no time and in no place echoed to the voice of man, or felt the impress of his footfall. All these orders were destroyed, not by the advancing civilization of man, but by the command of God. Amid some of the most terrible convulsions that have ever shaken the earth these races expired, with as sudden death as that of the savage monsters of an earlier age. "The disruption of the earth's crust, extending W. 16° S., and E. 16° N., through which the chain of the great Alps was forced up to its present elevation, which, according to M. D'Orbigny, was simultaneous with that which forced up the Chilian Andes,—a chain which extends over a length of three thousand miles of the western continent,—terminated the Tertiary Age, and preceded immediately the creation of the human race and its concomitant tribes. The waters of the seas and oceans, lifted up from their beds by this immense perturbation, swept over the continents

with irresistible force, destroying instantaneously the entire flora and fauna of the last tertiary period, and burying its ruins in the sedimentary deposits which ensued." (*Lardner.*)

After this, the earth, which had witnessed at least twenty-seven different exterminations and recreations, was itself buried under the freezing waters of the *Glacial and Drift* period. This constitutes the first formation of the last geological layer—the *Diluvian.* During the drift and the modified drift periods, North America, to the depth of two or three thousand feet, was covered with the sea. The submergence of the British Isles is beyond question. The earth was at that time swept with oceanic currents loaded with icebergs which had been wrenched off from the mountain peaks. Northern Germany, Poland, and Russia are overspread with bowlders from Sweden, Lapland, and Finland. Granite rocks have been thrown down upon Iceland, though the island itself was formed from lava. These bowlders, disconnected from the ice-floats to which they had been attached, sank through the flood of waters, and were anchored where they now remain.

That the whole earth, at one time or another, has been under water, is the uniform testimony of science. Says Humboldt, "The highest peaks of the Alps were once beneath the ocean's surface." "All land," says Lyell, "has been under water." "It seems," says Hitchcock, "that the surface of the globe has been a shoreless ocean." "The highest mountains," says Tenney, "have once been the ocean's bottom." The same sublime and startling record is inscribed upon every mountain peak and range around the globe, east and west, north and south, far and near. Long after the sandstones, coal, limestones, and animal remains of earth had been formed and deposited, long after the ancient river-courses had found the sea, all things were ingulfed under the waters of the drift, which were laden with ice-floats and which bore upon their bosoms the ruins of past generations. The surface bowlders and erratic stones found in every country confirm the statement that this was the condition of the world, and that it occurred *just before* the present, or the human era.

There is no language or speech at human command which more exactly expresses the condition of the earth after these mighty vicissitudes of which we have been speaking had taken place, and during the drift, when the world was ingulfed in dark, turbid, and frozen waters, than the original text of the old Hebrew prophet: "The earth *had become* a waste and a void, darkness was upon the face of the roaring deep, and the soul of God was brooding upon the face of the waters." Was there anything in the apparently insane and boisterous play of the great physical catastrophe of the nine distinct and long-continued eras we have been considering, anything in the turbulence and mighty clamor of the drift period, which could repeople the earth with living inhabitants? There was nothing. Had not the voice of God been heard above the waters, they had remained as they were *L. T. Townsend.*

Grouping comprehensively some geological facts we note (1) Vast strata of rock-formations, widely diverse from each other, too diverse to have been formed under the same circumstances and conditions of our globe. Some—the lowest in relative position—appear to have been once in a state of fusion under intense heat, while others—in general all the higher rocks—seem to have been deposited under water. Mineralogically, these rocks differ from each other very widely and also from the fused rocks. (2) Again, some are manifestly composed of fragments of pre-existing rocks, broken off and worn by long-continued attrition and then compacted—known as pudding-stone—the breccias. (3) Yet again; immense strata of these intermediate and higher rocks contain fossil organic remains, some of vegetables, others of animals or of both, and also in very great variety. More marvellous still; they are found occurring in groups, bearing a well-defined relation to each other, so that one stratum of rock contains species of vegetables and also of animals in a measure adapted to each other, and adjusted to the condition of the earth's surface and climate at one and the same time. Another stratum shall contain a different group, to some extent new and yet not altogether so, but lapping on with some of the earth's old inhabitants reproduced, and omitting other species. (4) Again, immense beds of coal are found, undoubtedly of vegetable origin, differing somewhat widely from each other as having been formed from diverse vegetable and forest material, and under various degrees of heat and pressure. No small amount of time must be given for the growth and deposition of these mountain piles of tree and fern. The charring of these coal pits of nature was provided for in the "fervent heat" of the earth just below the surface, coupled with pressure brought upon them it would seem by convulsions and upbreakings, to which the earth's crust has been many times subjected. (5) Limestone, largely of animal origin, demands in like manner time for the growth of the animals whose shelly incasements, accumulating age after age, have made such ample provision of limestone and of lime for the use of man. H. C.

The widest and most important generalization of modern geology is, that all the materials of the earth's crust, to the greatest depth to which we can penetrate, are of such a nature as to prove that they are not unchanged and primitive rocks, but the results of the operation of causes of change now in progress. They may be such things as conglomerates, sandstones, shales, and slates, all of which are the débris of older rocks, broken down into pebbles, sand, or mud; or they may be limestones, made up of the ruins of corals and shells; or beds of coal and metallic ores, accumulated by the agency of vegetable matter; or they may be substances analogous to the lavas and ashes of modern volcanoes; or they may be rocks that are aqueous in their origin, and now hardened and altered by heat. But everywhere we see the evidence of change under natural laws still in force. *Dawson.*

The earth's surface has at no very remote period experienced considerable elevations and depressions and changes of temperature Especially there are proofs of an extraordinary period of glaciers and icebergs, by means of

which huge bowlders have been transported from their ancient beds and scattered afar, and vast masses of débris, rocks ground down and pulverized, mixed with sand, gravel, and small stones, have been heaped up along the line of the glaciers and spread over their track. It is not easy to conceive the full measure of *utility* resulting from this great ice-flood and glacier movement, in grinding the surface of the rocky strata and mixing this finely pulverized matter with decomposed vegetable elements to prepare soil for our earth's surface. H. C.

## Cosmogony of Genesis.

*Prof. A. Guyot.*

[Condensed from the Paper read before the Evangelical Alliance at New York. For his full and final treatment of the subject, see the volume entitled "Creation." The views therein expressed are substantially those of Professor Dana, Principal Dawson, Dr. Godet, and many other Christian scientists and scholars.]

*The introduction* to the work of the six days is comprised in the first and second verses, in which we have the primordial creation of the matter of the universe, and a description of its original state. The primitive state of matter when first created is described in the second verse. We take the word "earth" to be in this verse an equivalent to matter in general. The use of the concrete word "earth," instead of the generic or abstract word "matter," is common to most languages, and was here a necessity, as such a word as "matter" does not exist in the Hebrew language. We feel then justified in understanding *aarets*, in this early stage of the history of the universe, as meaning the primordial cosmic material out of which God was going to organize the heavens and the earth. The same reasoning applies to the *waters* of the second verse. The Hebrew word *maïm* does not necessarily mean "waters," but applies as well to the fluid atmosphere; it is simply descriptive of the state of cosmic matter comprised in the word earth.

The sense of these two words being thus settled, every word of the second verse becomes clear and natural. The matter just created was gaseous; it was without form, for the property of gas is to expand indefinitely. It was void, because homogeneous and invisible. It was dark, because as yet inactive, light being the result of physical or chemical action. It was a deep, for its expansion in space, though indefinite, was not infinite, and it had dimensions. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face (outside, and not inside, as the pantheist would have it) of that vast gaseous mass, ready to act upon it, and to direct all its subsequent activity, according to a plan revealed by the great works which follow.

The central idea of the second verse is the state of matter when created. The Spirit of God, moving upon it, announces and prepares the work of the six coming days. The description applies, therefore, to the matter of the universe and the earth, and not to the earth alone as a globe already made, which would be no beginning.

The *First Day's* work was the production of light. At God's command movement begins. This is no creation, but a simple manifestation of the activity of matter. Under the action of gravity that immeasurable body of gaseous matter contracts; atoms conglomerate into molecules; nearer approach begets continual chemical combinations on a multitude of points; in the more concentrated part light and heat are produced, and the result is the appearance in the dark space of heaven of a large luminous mass, the primitive grand nebula, the prototype of those thousands of luminous clouds observed by the astronomer floating in the empty wastes beyond our starry heavens. Thus God *divided the light from the darkness*—that is, the light of the nebula from the dark outside matter, as yet inactive, and from the empty space around. And God called the light *day*, and the darkness he called *night*—both specific names—without reference to any period of time. And *the evening* (the dark chaotic time preceding) and the *morning* (the glorious light of that vast luminous mass) were the *first* day—the first great period of development, under God's guidance, of that world of matter just created; a day measured by the work assigned to it.

*The Second Day's* work is the organization of the heavens. "*And God said, Let there be an expanse* (firmament) *in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters; and God called the expanse heaven.*"

The central idea of this day's work is *division* or *separation*. The vast primitive nebula of the first day breaks up into a multitude of gaseous masses, and these are concentrated into stars. Motion is everywhere. Gravitation and the chemical forces tend to concentrate matter around various centres, and thus to isolate them from each other; centrifugal force tends to disperse them. Under the laws of the forces of matter and motion—established by God himself, and under his guidance—these numberless bodies, of all forms and sizes, which fill the space and adorn our heavens, combine into those worlds and groups of worlds whose wonderful organization it is the province of astronomy to discover. But the text speaks of *waters above the* heavens, and of *waters under the heavens*. The latter are determined by the work of the third day, by which it appears that they are the matter out of which our globe was made, the waters above being the matter which formed the heavenly bodies.

*The Third Day* has two works. The first is the formation of the material globe of the earth. The main idea is condensation of matter into the solid globe, its liquid covering and gaseous envelope. Here, as usual, Moses gives us the final result of the work, and not the process by which it was produced. For that we must ask geology. Guided by the general facts of geology, and aided by the light derived from chemistry, physics, and astronomy, we may distinguish, in the gradual formation of the physical globe, before the introduction of life, four periods: 1. The nebulous. 2. The mineral incandescent. 3. The period of the hot oceans. 4. The period of the cold oceans.

In the first the matter of the earth was a part of the hot atmosphere of the sun. In the slow process of contraction, consequent upon its cool-

ing, the sun left it behind in the form of a gaseous ring. The ring breaks in several places, and is rolled up into a globular mass, which, according to the laws of motion, rotates upon itself, and revolves around its parent body nearly in the plane of its equator, and with the velocity imparted to it by the sun itself. The new globe, born from the old matter of the sun, now enters, as a *gaseous mass*, into the first period of its separate existence. Loss of heat by radiation causes further concentration. The molecules, brought nearer together and to the proper temperature for chemical action, now combine. A vast, long-continued, and ever-renewed conflagration, with an enormous development of heat, takes place, and the result is an incandescent melted mineral body, surrounded by a vast luminous atmosphere. The earth is a *sun*. This is the second period of its history.

The cooling continues : a hard crust is formed on the surface of the melted body of the globe, and, when the temperature becomes low enough to admit of the formation of water, the ocean — which was before a part of the atmosphere in the shape of vapor — is deposited on the solid surface of the globe. The temperature of this first ocean must have been very high, owing to the immense weight of the atmosphere resting upon it. It has been calculated that when the deposition began, the temperature of the first waters could not have been less than 600° Fahr. This geological phase, though it is one through which a cooling globe must have necessarily passed, has not, thus far, received the attention it deserves. Let us try to see what this state of things implies, for it is important for the explanation of the fourth day. The oceans were not only very warm, but must have been highly acidulated ; for all the acids, which form a large part of the thousands upon thousands of feet of rocks deposited since, must have been then in the atmosphere. These hot and acid waters, resting upon the old mineral crust, must have decomposed it, and a new series of chemical combinations have been formed, to which, perhaps, we may refer the deposition of the lowermost crystalline rocks which are at the base of the new terrestrial crust — the only one we actually know. By these powerful chemical actions the earth was transformed into a vast galvanic pile, emitting constant streams of electricity, which, reaching the ethereal space at the boundary of the thick atmosphere, became luminous. During this third period the earth was still surrounded by a photosphere of subdued brilliancy : it was a *nebulous star*.

The process goes on ; the physical and chemical forces, thus far so active, subside and enter into a state of quiescence ; the photosphere disappears ; the globe becomes an extinct body ; the ocean cools down to the mild temperature of our tropical seas, and is ready for the introduction of living beings. The age of matter is over ; the age of life is at hand. The fourth period was that of *the dark planet and the cool oceans*.

This fourth period, and perhaps the latter part of the third, are represented in the geological strata by the so-called azoic rocks, which are found in all continents. Here also we have evidence of the appearance of the first land above the waters of the ocean. Considerable surfaces and low mountain chains, both in the Old and New World, belong to this age. Geology explains very plausibly the sinking of the large surfaces — now containing the oceans — and the rising between them of the continents and mountains, by the gradual shrinkage of the cooling interior, forcing the hard external crust — now too large — to mould itself on the smaller sphere by folding into mighty wrinkles. This process could not be better described than by the words of Moses : "Let the waters be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear" — implying that the land was formed already under the surface of the ocean, and was subsequently raised above it. The first work of the third day closes the age of matter ; for, if science is right in its view of the origin of our solar system, the sun, moon, and stars of the fourth day were then in existence, but invisible to the earth.

But in this third day there is a second work, entirely unlike the first, belonging to the age of organic life — the creation of the plant — a creation, indeed, of a new principle, though it is not designated in the text by *bará*, because it is but the peristyle of the temple of true life, the condition of its existence. We say that it is a creation ; for in it matter is controlled by an immaterial principle, directing its forces so as to make it assume new forms unknown to the mineral. In the plant, as in every organized being, there is an inward principle of individuality not possessed by the crystal ; a variety of functions and organs working together toward a common aim for the benefit of the individual ; an inward growth, with a beginning and a definite end, and a reproduction which perpetuates the species — phenomena which are all absolutely foreign to inorganic matter. These characteristics are admirably summed up in the eleventh verse. If we should understand the text as meaning that the whole plant kingdom, from the lowest infusorial form to the highest dicotyledon, was created at this early day, geology would assuredly disprove it. But the author mentions every order of facts but once, and he does it at the time of its first introduction. Here, therefore, the whole system of plants is described in full outline, as it has been developed, from the lowest to the most perfect, in the succession of ages.

*Fourth Day.* — The sun and moon are not created, they existed before, but now enter into new relations with the earth. During the age of matter the intensity of chemical action was a source of permanent light — the earth was self-luminous — the light of the sun, moon, and stars being merged in the stronger light of its photosphere, and therefore invisible to it. But after the disappearance of its luminous envelope, our glorious heavens, with sun, moon, and stars, become visible, and the earth depends upon this outside source for light and heat.

*Fifth Day.* — The work of this day is the creation of the lower animals, up to the birds. "*And God created great whales, and every creature which moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, and every winged fowl.*" The order of their appearance is that discovered by geology : the water animals first, together with the large amphibious, the great whales (marine monsters),

and other reptiles, and then the birds. This corresponds with the first geological ages, the paleozoic and the mesozoic, up to the tertiary epoch.

*Sixth Day.*—The sixth day, which is the third of the era of life, contains two works, as did the third day of the era of matter : first, the creation of the higher animals especially living on the dry land, or the mammalia—it corresponds with the tertiary age ; and, second, the creation of man in the quaternary age.

Here end the working days of the Creator. All his other works God had declared to be *good ;* but on the sixth day "*God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was* VERY GOOD." The work of the whole week is now finished, and perfect as God will have it for his purpose —the education of man. Now begins the *seventh day,* the day of rest, or the *Sabbath* of the earth, when the globe and its inhabitants are completed. Since the beginning of this day no new creation has taken place. God rests as the Creator of the visible universe. The forces of nature are in that admirable equilibrium which we now behold, and which is necessary to our existence. No more mountains or continents are formed, no new species of plants or animals are created. Nature goes on steadily in its wonted path. All movement, all progress has passed into the realm of mankind, which is now accomplishing its task. The seventh day is, then, the present age of our globe ; the age in which we live, and which was prepared for the development of mankind. The narrative of Moses seems to indicate this fact ; for at the end of each of the six working days of creation we find an *evening.* But the morning of the seventh is not followed by any *evening.* The day is still open. When the evening shall come the last hour of humanity will strike. *Guyot.*

[A full discussion of the subject from a similar standpoint will be found in Prof. Dana's "Geology," and various articles in the Bib. Sacra ; in Dr. Godet's "Studies in the Old Test. ;" in Principal Dawson's "Archaia ;" and in Macdonald's "Creation and Fall."]

Of the *Nebular Theory* in its present form La Place is the author. Perhaps the first suggestion came from Sir W. Herschel. It has been adopted by Mädler, defended by Pfaff, and its truth taken for granted by Humboldt. It supposes that the whole solar system was originally one mass of vapory or nebulous matter which. according to the laws of gravitation, assumed the form of an immense sphere. This sphere received (from without) an impulse which caused it to revolve on its axis from west to east. In consequence of this revolving motion, it became flattened at the poles and swollen in the equatorial region, and in consequence of the greatness of the centrifugal force at the equator and the contemporaneous condensation and contraction of the nebulous mass a free revolving ring, similar to that of Saturn, detached itself in the region of the equator. This ring not being of uniform density, and in consequence of contraction, broke in one or more places, and these fragments, in obedience to the laws of gravitation, became a sphere or spheres, that is a planet or planets, all necessarily revolving from west to east round the parent mass. Another ring was formed in like manner and another planet came into existence ; and so on until the whole solar system was complete. A similar process took place with regard to some of the planets, and thus they got their moons. *McCaul.*

Half a century ago Dr. Whewell discussed under the name of the nebular hypothesis that theory of rotation which had been indicated by Herschel, and more largely taught by La Place, as the probable method through which the solar system has taken its form. Carefully abstaining at that early date from a formal judgment on the hypothesis, he appears to discuss it with favor, and he shows that this hypothesis, which assumes "a beginning of the present state of things," is in no way adverse to the Mosaic cosmogony. The theory has received marked support from opposite quarters. In the "Vestiges of Creation" it is frankly adopted ; the very curious experiment of Prof. Plateau is detailed at length on its behalf, and the author considers, with La Place, that the zodiacal light on which Humboldt in his "Kosmos" has dwelt at large may be a remnant of the luminous atmosphere originally diffused around the sun. Dr. McCaul, in his very able argument on the Mosaic record, quotes Humboldt, Pfaff, and Mädler—a famous German astronomer—as adhering to it It appears on the whole to be in possession of the field ; and McCaul observes that, "had it been devised for the express purpose of removing the supposed difficulties of the Mosaic record, it could hardly have been more to the purpose." *W. E. Gladstone.*

[On the other hand], Mr. Proctor, in an essay on the new star in Andromeda, puts himself among its opponents in such decided language as this :

"If any occurrence in the star depths could possibly shake men's faith in that theory—or rather speculation, for so La Place regarded it —the sudden appearance of a new star in the midst of a mass of stellar matter should do so. A theory which has been accepted by astronomers under the mistaken idea that there are no physical objections against it, and by physicists under the equally mistaken idea that observed astronomical facts absolutely require it ; a hypothesis according to which a mass of gas, far rarer than hydrogen at atmospheric pressure (nay, almost infinitely rarer), and having a span of about six thousand millions of miles, rotated for millions of years as a coherent whole—such a theory may be expected to retain vitality under almost any conceivable shock. Otherwise, assuredly the discovery that sudden and rapid changes, not the inconceivably slow changes imagined by La Place, affect star clouds of enormous size, might be expected to destroy men's faith in an idea which its celebrated author never regarded as more than a guess, and which, with the knowledge of physical laws possessed in our time, should have been long ago rejected as obviously erroneous."

## OBJECTIONS TO THE INTERPRETATION OF PROF. GUYOT AND OTHERS.

1. *By those who favor the nebular hypothesis as the best sustained*

"Heavens and earth" never mean materials, and that meaning would not agree with the

context. The connecting "and" of Gen. 1 : 2 shows that the earth is the same spoken of in the first, not the materials. *McCaul.*——A use of the word "*waters*" so extraordinary and unparalleled cannot be admitted. Nowhere else do we find attached to it the vestige of such a meaning. The context is wholly against such an interpretation. *E. P. Barrows.*

Genesis speaks of days ; but the periods implied by the stratifications and the fossils they contain must each have consisted of millions of centuries. Further, according to Genesis, animal life did not begin upon the earth till after the appearance of the plants, whereas the oldest strata that contain vegetable remains exhibit already some débris of crustaceans and of corals —monuments of an animal life which must have existed contemporaneously with that primitive vegetation. At the same time that the rich carboniferous flora developed itself, there existed also different species of fish, and one breathing vertebrate (the *labyrinthodon*). These are differences of which we are not to deny the importance. *Godet.*

Though the Mosaic language implies that the six days of which he speaks are six periods of time, it does not follow that they are to be identified with the six periods commonly received in geology. The impossibility of identifying these periods is evident from the fact that of the work of two days in the Mosaic account geology knows nothing and astronomy nothing certain ; namely, that of the first and the fourth. After the original creation of heaven and earth and the condition of the earth, Moses mentions the evocation of light and the creation of the ether in which the heavenly bodies move, as effected in the first two days. So far as the record is concerned, these two days may include the whole of the primary, secondary and tertiary formations with all their products, their flora and their fauna. The object of the Mosaic narrative is to explain the origin of the universe and its parts. So soon, therefore, as he has mentioned the light and the ether he advances at once to the preparation of the earth for man ; and thus the third day presents the dry land in its present state. "When the seas had settled into their new beds and the outlines of the land were permanently defined, the latest and greatest act of creation was accomplished by clothing the earth with the vegetation which now covers it, peopling the land and the water with the animal tribes which now exist, and calling into being the human race. . . . A striking physical difference between the present and all formal periods consists in the different divisions of the earth's surface into climatological zones, each zone having its peculiar fauna and flora. In all former ages and periods, including those which immediately preceded the present, no traces of climate difference have been found" (*Lardner*). In this is a striking coincidence with the Mosaic statement, which represents the earth as existing for a long period before the sun became its source of light and heat, a period during which there could have been no climatic difference ; and consequently the fauna and flora of warm climates are found in the prehuman period (when there was apparently one uniform high temperature over the whole earth) in latitudes where they could not now exist. Here is an instance of the extraordinary scientific accuracy of the Mosaic account. *McCaul,* "Aids to Faith," p. 250 ff.

Had we been told, that instantly, by the Divine fiat, the earth was covered with vegetation of the largest and most perfect kind, that in a moment there stood forth in all their physical perfection the "creeping hyssop," the rose of Sharon, and the waving cedar of Lebanon, that in the twinkling of an eye, from being a barren, inanimate, and solitary waste, our world was swarming with animals of every size and species, full grown, and at the maximum of their strength and beauty, there would have been no *a priori* difficulty in believing it. There would have been nothing irrational or incredible in the account. Such an instantaneous production would have been in harmony with all our ideas of the Divine power and dignity. But it has not been so revealed. A different method was taken by the Divine Wisdom,—the method to which we give the name of nature,—the method of growth, of succession, of duration, of the apparent birth of one thing out of another, and this, too, through the action of a previous nature quickened by a new *Word* into a new energy, and to the development of a new law. Both these suppositions are rational, both are credible if clearly revealed. But how long were these creative days? The question must remain unanswered. They were *dies ineffabiles.* They were incommensurable by any estimates we could apply. The whole question, too, is comparative. In one aspect they may have been short, in another immensely long. The Bible has not told us anything about it. The geologist talks of millions and billions of years. He measures the operations of God and nature then, by the movements of the latter as they come under his present observation. On the other hand, the rigid advocate of the twenty-four-hour theory presses him with a great many very puzzling questions as to the rationale of such a method, which our confident appellant to reason and science finds it very difficult to answer. Why so many ages apparently wasted before the living organizations? Why so many thousand years of *fungi* and sea-weed? Why so many ages of shell-fish with their unmeaning varieties,—unmeaning, he would say, as long as there were no human eyes to admire, and no men of science to classify them into genera and species? Why so many unhistorical centuries of zoophytes, and worms, and monstrous reptiles,—all before man appeared? What wisdom in all this ; what possible design worthy of an all-wise and omnipotent Being ; what order, what fitness, what beauty? It is absurdity, it is confusion, says the literalist. it is worse than chaos, it is worse than atheism, it is, in truth, a godless nature that would work in this manner, and not the eternal Wisdom. Such *a priori* objections may be pressed with great force and skill. The geologist, from his mere scientific position, cannot answer a word. It would certainly look like a very strange proceeding. But he may press home upon our literalist just as many questions which he cannot answer. Why a world of waters, then a world with an atmosphere and clouds, then a world of vege-

tation, then a world of reptile life, then a world inhabited by quadrupeds, each precisely twenty-four hours before the other? And what must have been the apparatus for making these days of twenty-four hours that had their date before the outshining of the celestial luminaries? Did the light go out, and the darkness come back, each time, from its submersion in the abyss? Why is there no explanation of the difficulty which the writer must have seen to exist, if the twenty-four-hour duration had been meant? Why is there not the least allusion to it in any other part of the Bible in which the creation is spoken of, and its marvels made the theme of praise and admiration? What possible conjectures can be offered on this head, which will not seem more strange, forced, and capricious than any positions assumed by the most extravagant geologist? There is no end to such questions; and the maintainer of the twenty-four-hour hypothesis cannot answer one of them without resorting to that divine *arbitrium* under which the scientific speculatist may take shelter as well as himself. T. L.

2. *The Six Days' Record not an Account of Geological Changes.* (Condensed from Kurtz.)

The Bible says nothing about the formation of the earth's crust and of mountains, and the account of the creative days (as well as Ps. 104) presupposes them as already existing. Hence the organisms also which lie concealed in these strata originated not *during* but *previous* to the six creative days. The creation of plants and animals which the Bible relates is different from, and posterior to, that of the organisms which geology discloses. Those primeval animals of which the remains are found buried in the strata, like the rocks which hold them, belong to a period which Revelation does not describe. Theirs is a world quite different from ours, and which has perished long ago. The Bible is only concerned to narrate the creation of those animals and plants which were assigned to man. It professes to be a rule of faith, and not a manual of geology.

The vegetable and animal kingdoms of the strata are very different from those of our world, and it is evident that those plants and animals, of which *the Bible* speaks, were intended to continue and to remain with man on the earth, and not completely to disappear before the appearance of man. This may be gathered even from the terms in which we are told that grass, herbs, and trees—each after *their* own kind—had fruit and seed by which to propagate their species, from the emphasis with which we are assured that every type of animals was created *after its own kind*, and from the circumstance that each obtained the blessing, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters and the earth." Besides, the Bible manifestly refers to the creation of organisms which had indeed been produced *before* man, but still, and on that very ground, were destined *for* him. For every herb bearing seed, upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is fruit, was given to man for meat; and with reference to animals man was commanded to subdue them, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth. The plants on which he was to feed, and the beasts over which he was to have dominion, were evidently those whose creation is related in that chapter; hence the organisms described in the Bible must also be those which were destined to live *along with man*, or, generally speaking, the plants and animals presently existing. The same inference may be gathered from the constant repetition of the statement: "and God saw that it was good." Being good, these creatures must have been destined to continue and not to perish. The types buried in the rocks were not destined to continue perpetually, or else have not attained their destination; they were not created for *man*, and have not been his contemporaries on earth. Long before he appeared they had become extinct, and were shut up in their rocky graves. Therefore *the fossils of the rocks cannot represent those organisms whose creation the Bible relates.* It speaks not of the petrifications and Entozoa of geology: it refers only to those beings which were created *for* man, partly for his nourishment and partly as means of, or aids to, his own peculiar activity. On the other hand geology does not treat of *those* creatures which, according to the Scriptures, were called forth on the third, fifth, and sixth days, nor can this science take notice of them, since their types were intended to continue and not to perish, and their families were not to be petrified in strata, but each individual was to decay in the ordinary manner, so that their bones have mostly passed away without leaving any trace. As the Bible gives no countenance to the idea that the crust of the earth was formed on the fifth or sixth day, and implies that sea and land had previously already existed, so neither does it admit the hypothesis according to which the work of the fifth and sixth days is relegated into previous days. It does not describe the origin of the crust of the earth and the creation of organic beings as having taken place at the same time, but as having occurred the one after the other. Hence what geology relates belongs to a period anterior to that which the history of creation describes.

This view is further confirmed by another conclusion of celebrated palæontologists; that a difference of species, types and families is found to exist between the various forms of life which occur in different rocky formations of the primeval world. Thus *Agassiz* remarks: "I hold it to be demonstrated that the totality of organic beings was renewed *not only in the intervals of each of those great periods* which we designate as *formations, but also in the stratification of each separate division of every formation.* Nor do I believe in the genetic descent of the living species from *the different tertiary divisions* which have been regarded as identical, but which I hold to be *specifically different*, so that I cannot adopt the idea of a transformation of the species of one formation into that of another. In enunciating these conclusions, let it be understood that they are not inductions derived from the study of one particular class of animals (such as fishes), and applied to other classes, but the results of direct comparison of very considerable collections of petrifications of different formations and classes of animals."

*Bronn*, indeed, refers to some formations that occasionally contain specimens similar to those of other strata. But even if *Bronn's* opinion were confirmed, the general fact (which mere exceptions could not remove) would still remain, that there is a peculiar genetic relationship, not only between different rocks, but frequently even between the strata of one and the same formation and the organic types which they contain, and the conclusion would still be that each formation had its own independent creation, and hence that with every formation the act of creation was renewed. But the Bible speaks only of one creation of organic life, and could, therefore, at most, allude to only one of these many creations. But that even this is not the case is manifest from the fact that the Bible refers to the organisms which were created for man, and hence still continue ; while the "transition" and stratified formations only contain types which became extinct long before man appeared.

A further confirmation of this view is found in the fact that in the earliest formations plants and animals appear simultaneously, while the Bible informs us that one kingdom and one class of animals was called forth after the other.

*Other objections summarized.* It is *evident*, that we read only of *one* general inundation within the six creative days (Gen. 1 : 2–10) to which, on the third day, bounds were assigned which were not to be passed till the flood. But the theory that identifies the geological with the Biblical account of creation, requires that we should suppose that a number of inundations had taken place in order to account for the numerous secondary and tertiary stratifications which are thought to have taken place on the fifth and sixth days.

Scripture *plainly* states that the mountains of the earth existed, *at any rate*, on the *third* day. But this theory requires us to believe that the secondary and tertiary (if not the primary) strata and rocks had been formed on the fifth and sixth days.

Scripture *plainly* states that plants *only*, and not animals of any kind, were created on the third day, and animals *only*, but not trees and plants, on the fifth and sixth days. But according to this theory, these Biblical are the same as the geological periods of which each has *both* its plants and animals.

It is *evident* that the account in Genesis only speaks of three periods of organic creation, while geology recounts as many as there are stratifications. Yet the above theory identifies the Biblical with the geological creation.

Lastly, it is *evident* on the one hand that the Flora and Fauna of the primeval world had perished *before* man appeared, and hence could not have been destined to continue along with man on the earth ; and on the other hand, that according to the clear and unequivocal statements of Scripture the Flora and Fauna created during the six days was created *for* man, and destined to continue on earth along with him. Yet the above theory confounds these two kinds of Flora and Fauna. K.

RECONCILIATION OF GEOLOGY WITH GENESIS.

1. The method of reconciling the conclusions of geology, especially its conclusion respecting the great age of the world, with the statements of the first chapters of Genesis most popular with Christian scientists in our day, is one which assumes that the word *day* in these chapters is to be understood not in the sense of a period of twenty-four hours, but in the sense of an *age*, or long period of time, characterized by something peculiar to it. Understood in this sense, Moses' days of creation correspond to the eras of geology ; and the "morning and evening" are but the opening and closing portions of those eras.

2. A second method of reconciling the conclusions of geology, especially its conclusion respecting the great age of the world, with the statements of the first chapters of Genesis, is, to understand Gen. 1 : 1—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"—to refer to a period long anterior to that of the events recorded in the subsequent portions of the chapters ; that Moses makes this statement for the purpose of teaching us who was the Creator of all things, and who, therefore, was the proper object of man's adoration and worship ; that then the long ages demanded by geology followed ; ages in which the rock-strata with all their fossils were deposited, with the exception of those in which human remains occur ; and of these Moses says nothing, for the sufficient reason that their history has nothing to do with the religious history of man ; that when God begins the subsequent setting in order of the earth which is to fit it for the inhabitation of man, Moses resumes the narrative in the words, "And the earth was *waste and void*, and darkness was upon the face of the deep"—thus describing the chaotic condition to which the earth was reduced at the time—"and the spirit of God moved upon" (*was brooding upon*) "the face of the waters." Then follows an account of God's preparation of the earth as a dwelling-place for man, and the restocking it with plants and animals adapted to its improved condition ; many of these plants and animals being the same in kind with those existing in preceding ages, others entirely new ; and then the story of man's creation is given us, with which the cosmogony properly closes. *Armstrong.*

[In "Nature and Revelation" (pp. 131–135) Dr. Armstrong answers succinctly the chief objections which have been urged against this second method of reconciliation.]

3. Neither of these methods of reconciling the cosmogony of Moses with the demands of geology as to the great age of the earth should be adopted *as a finality*. Either of them will fully answer the purposes of Christian apology, will suffice to show that there is no real conflict on this point between the Mosaic cosmogony and the fairly established conclusions of the geologist. The time for making out a complete "harmony" of the two has not yet come. It is to be remembered that the Mosaic cosmogony is given us in the language of common life—a language in which things are described as they appear, while the geological record is in the language of science ; and a harmony of the two involves the correct translation of the one into the language of the other. That the cosmogony of geology is yet very incomplete, and

very uncertain, too, especially as regards the element of *time*, every intelligent geologist will admit. To be convinced of this, one needs but to read Professor Huxley's address before the British Geological Society, published in his volume of "Lay Sermons," more particularly the part of it concerning "geological contemporaneity."

In such circumstances the construction of a perfect "harmony" of the two records is out of the question. What we can do, and all we can safely do at present is, to collate the two from time to time, carefully distinguishing between the established truths of science and the unproved hypotheses of enthusiastic scientists, noting the points in which they agree, and quietly leaving seeming discrepancies to be explained in the future. This is the course which the writer has pursued for many years; and in those years he has seen science, in more instances than one, adopt the very doctrines of the Mosaic cosmogony which at one time it denounced—*e.g*, the doctrines of "the unity of mankind" and the laws of "biogenesis" and "homogenesis." *Armstrong.*

The enlightened Christian will never doubt that the narrative of Moses will be established as true by a perfected geology and astronomy. Meanwhile, he is at liberty to rest his mind provisionally on any working hypothesis which may seem to fulfil best the conditions of the problem so far as they are now known. He may accept the explanation of Chalmers and Hengstenberg, or that of Hugh Miller and Shultz, or that of the Westminster divines. He may rest there until Moses shall be interpreted aright, and the facts in nature shall be discovered. Then a generalization will be reached which will include and harmonize all the testimony of God's word and all the phenomena of God's works relating to the matter. *E. P. Humphrey.*

While questions regarding details may be urged which, in the present stage of scientific inquiry, cannot be satisfactorily answered, recent discoveries in geology and applications in natural philosophy, taken in connection with advances in Biblical scholarship, warrant our anticipating such a combination of results as may soon shed light through what is still obscure. Meanwhile, we may suggest the probability that, while in the six natural days the preparation of the earth for man was consummated through a series of divinely-instituted adjustments, these transactions are the outcome or crown of processes which had been transpiring through long antecedent periods—but an outcome only through the mediately creative power of God. The six days' work, therefore, may be *representative* of those changes and advances which constitute the previous history of our globe as the intended abode of man. Revelation, in closing the Bible, unfolds the future; Genesis, in its commencement, reveals the distant past. The Bible sheds light in both directions, until it fades in mystery; but the same principles of interpretation can be legitimately applied whether we look into the future or the past. We may assume, therefore, that as one prophetic description sometimes serves to cover widely separated future events, so the one historical description in Genesis may embrace events in the past lying widely apart. *W. Fraser.*

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## Section 17.

GENESIS 1 : 26 AND 2 : 7.

1. *The Trinity.* 2. *Jehovah Elohim.*

ONLY where the true idea of God is known is the true idea of man and of history understood. Israel is the only nation that has a true historic sense. The historic recollections of the Israelites have a universal background and range of view. Their traditions are not those of a single people only, but of a primitive history of the race. It is not so with heathen nations. Before Christ, the world was divided into different nationalities, and each nation went back only into its own past. It had no other antecedent than the land it dwelt in; it was the offspring of that. All beyond their own history, respecting remote beginnings, or views of heaven and earth, of gods and men, are mere theogonic and cosmogonic myths. *Auberlen.*

While all nations over the earth have developed a religious tendency which acknowledged a higher than human power in the universe, Israel is the only one which has risen to the grandeur of conceiving this power as the One, Only, Living God. Nor is it possible to explain on merely historical grounds how the Hebrews first obtained and so persistently clung to this grand first truth. Their chronicles show continual lapses into idolatry, and yet they always recovered themselves; till, at last, after a bitter discipline of national calamities, they finally turned with enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah. . . . If we are asked how it was that Abraham possessed not only the primitive conception of the divinity, as He had revealed Himself to all mankind, but passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the

knowledge of the One God, we are content to answer that it was by a special *divine revelation*. *Max Müller*.

1. **The Trinity. 1 : 26, Let us make.** Only a plurality of persons can justify the phrase. Hence we are forced to conclude that the plural pronoun indicates a plurality of persons or hypostases in the Divine Being. M.——"Let *us*" (ch. 3 : 22, *One* of us). Undoubtedly allusion is intended to a plurality in the Godhead, to which, in a later chapter, the "Angel of the Lord," who is different from God the Lord, and yet One with Him, even more clearly points. *Gerl.*——How remarkable that the *plural* term, Elohim, should be applied to the Divine Being; especially when there was not the least necessity for so doing arising from the Hebrew language itself. How much is this apparent anomaly increased by the fact that these plural names are construed with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives. How awakening and suggestive the fact that Elohim, God, thus designated by a plural appellative, should also speak of himself in plural forms: "And God said, Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness!" while in the declaration, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," the idea of plurality combined with unity is still more fully developed. J. H.——I see no explanation of this plural that is at all satisfactory save that which assumes a reference to the persons of the Trinity. As one reason for such reference it may be suggested as certainly not improbable—that the idea of man, God's chief work in creation, was coupled with his future history (all present to the divine mind)—as fallen, yet also as redeemed, and specially as redeemed *by means of the incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh*. Supposing this incarnation present to the divine thought, the significance of this plural would be—Let us proceed to make in our own image this wonderful being whose nature the eternal Son shall one day assume—this man who is to bear relations to us so extraordinary, so wonderful before the angels, so signal before all created minds, so glorious in its results to the whole moral universe! Have not *we*—Father, Son and Holy Ghost—a most surpassing interest in the creation of this being, man? H. C.

What should hinder us from accepting the solution, given by the best expositors, ancient and modern, and drawn from this consideration, that in the unity of the Divine Essence there is a plurality of persons, coequal and coeternal, who might say, with truth and propriety, "Let *us* make man," and, "Man is become as ONE OF US"? Of such a personality revelation informs us: it is that, upon which the economy of man's redemption is founded; his creation, as well as that of the world, is, in different passages, attributed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; what more natural therefore than that, at his production, this form of speech should be used by the divine Persons? *Horne.*——*If*, on the sixth day of Creation, God solemnly called upon the persons of the Trinity to unite in the formation of man, saying, "Let us make man in our image," in due time also He called upon the same Trinity to unite in the work of his restoration,—the Father accepting the sacrifice, the Son achieving it, and the Spirit forever sanctifying the redeemed. W. A. B.

In these words, which precede the final act and climax of the Creation, the early Fathers detected a clear intimation of a Plurality of Persons in the Godhead. Their doctrine is to the effect that the verb, "let us make," points to a Plurality of Persons within the Unity of the One Agent, while the "likeness," common to all these Persons and itself One, suggests very pointedly their participation in an undivided Nature. And in such sayings as "Behold the man is become like one of us," used with reference to the Fall or "Go to, let us go down," etc., uttered on the eve of the Dispersion, it is clear that an equality of rank is distinctly assumed between the Speaker and those whom he is addressing. The true sense of the comparatively indeterminate language occurring in this chapter is more fully explained by the priestly Blessing prescribed in the Book of Numbers (6 : 23–26). This is spoken of as a putting the *name* of God, that is to say, a symbol unveiling his nature, upon the children of Israel. Here we discover a distinct limit to the *number* of the Persons hinted at in Genesis as being internal to the Unity of God The priest is to repeat the most holy Name three times. The Hebrew accentuation, whatever its date, shows that the Jews themselves saw in this repetition the declaration of a mystery in the Divine nature. Unless such a repetition had been designed to secure the assertion of some important truth, a single mention of the sacred Name would have been more natural in a system, the object of which was to impress belief in the Divine Unity upon an entire people. This significant repetition, suggesting without distinctly asserting a Trinity in the being of God, did its work in the mind of Israel. It is impossible not to be struck with the recurrence of the threefold rhythm of prayer or praise, again and again, in

the Psalter. And to omit traces of the influence of this priestly blessing discoverable in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, observe the crowning significance of the vision of Isaiah (6 : 2–8). In the adoration of the most holy Three, who are yet One, by the veiled and mysterious seraphim, and in the last inquiry on the part of the Divine Speaker, the very terms of which reveal him as One and yet more than One, what a flood of almost Gospel light is poured upon the intelligence of the elder Church ! H. P. L.

While the doctrine of the divine Unity was taught in the most express terms, there are, at the same time, intimations that there subsists somehow a plurality in, or compatible with, this Unity. Elohim, the most usual, and probably the earliest name of God in Hebrew, is a plural term, but with very rare exceptions conjoined with verbs and adjectives singular. But, seeing that in the later Hebrew Scriptures the doctrine of a plurality in the divine Essence is unquestionably taught, what occasion is there for denying that its germ is found in the Pentateuch – a supposition which would at once account for the use of the plural term Elohim? A passage in Deut. 6 : 4 is very significant : "Hear Israel, Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah." Here plurality and unity are plainly ascribed to Jehovah at the same time. "The only expressible idea suggested by such a statement is, that while there is but one God, and while that God is one in substance, there is, nevertheless, a distinction of some sort or other coexisting with this unity, and compatible with it" (*Alexander*). Further, in various instances, God is introduced as speaking to or of himself in the plural. Thus, Gen. 1 : 26, "God said, Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness ;" chap. 3 : 22, "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as *one of us ;*" and ch. 11 : 7, "Go to, *let us* go down, and there (let us) confound their language." Still more remarkable is the language of ch. 19 : 24 ; "Jehovah rained brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven."

But, besides these intimations generally of a plurality in the Godhead, particular mention is made of Agents, who are denominated "the Spirit," and "the Angel of God," or "Jehovah" respectively. The agency of the former first appears in the creation : "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1 : 2), preparing the dark chaotic mass for the evolutions which were to follow from the Divine fiat. That the "Spirit" in this case is not simply an attribute of the Creator, appears from the whole tenor of the narrative, and still more from the passage where mention is next made of the same Agent : "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6 : 3). Other references are, Ex. 31 : 3 : "I have filled him (Bezaleel) with the Spirit of God ;" Num. 24 : 2 : "The Spirit of God came upon Balaam ;" ch. 27 : 18 : "The Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua . . . a man in whom is the Spirit ;" that is God's Spirit, as appears from ch. 11 : 25, 29. With respect, again, to the "Angel of God," or of "Jehovah," fuller and more precise information is afforded in the Mosaic writings. That this was a Divine Agent, and not a created angel or messenger of God speaking and acting merely in the name of Him by whom he was commissioned, appears from various considerations. (1) He makes statements and promises which imply the possession of Divine prerogatives ; as in the promise to Hagar (Gen. 16 : 10), to Abraham (22 : 12, 15-17), and to Jacob (31 : 11–13). It was this same Being to whom Jacob subsequently referred as the Angel who had redeemed him from all evil, and in whom he recognized a power to bestow blessing (48 : 15, 16). (2) He is addressed as Jehovah and God, and is so styled by the writer of the Pentateuch, showing that it was not through any misconception that these appellations were bestowed. Thus the person who appeared to Hagar is four times named the Angel of the Lord ; and then it is added : "She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, thou God seest me" (16 : 13). But the most explicit testimony is in Ex. 3 : 2–6, where it is stated that "the Angel of the Lord" appeared to Moses in the burning bush ; and then is added : "When the Lord saw that Moses turned aside to see, the Lord called unto him out of the midst of the bush," and said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham," etc. In reference to this theophany, Moses, in his concluding discourse, uses the expression, "He that dwelt in the bush" (Deut. 33 : 16), to designate Jehovah, to whom alone he looked for any blessing. (3) The Angel of God is represented as distinct from God, in Ex. 23 : 20, 21 : "Behold, I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not ; for he will not pardon your transgressions ; for *my name is in him.*" Comparing this declaration with chap. 32 : 34 ; 33 : 2, where God threatened that, in consequence of the Israelites' idolatry, He himself no longer, but an angel, would be their guide, there is an unequivocal distinction between the angels referred to in the two cases. The one was a token of favor, and is so regarded in Isa. 63 : 9, the other

was deprecated by Moses as a judgment. Further, that the Angel, in the one case at least, was not a creature, is proven by the terms: "He will not pardon your sins," and God's "name is in him," plainly showing him to be possessed of Divine prerogatives, and to be God's representative or revealer, by his bearing the Divine name. Yet the fact, as here declared, that he was sent by God, intimated that, though he was God, he in some sense or other was distinct from him,—a point, however, the full explanation of which was reserved to subsequent times. D. M. (See Sec. 43.)

The Christian Revelation has unfolded to us the truth above all reach of reason,—that in the Unity of the divine substance is a Trinity of the divine manifestations; and it has instructed us, when we would reflect upon that wondrous essence which caused and sustains the universe, —the Life of all Life and Soul of all Souls,—to regard it as mysteriously threefold,—as parting into three streams from one eternal source, which (stooping to our capacities, relationships, and language) it has styled the Father, Son, and Spirit. Of what these mighty personages are, *in their own nature*, it declares nothing; for no revelation can communicate what no created faculty can apprehend. But it tells us, and largely, that which alone it imports that we should know; it tells of their relation to *us*, of the distinctness of their offices, and of our corresponding duties. It declares what blessings *descend* from them, what answering tribute should *rise* from us. W. A. B.——All vital theological systems consciously or unconsciously make the Trinity the foundation, each separate truth a column, each connecting truth an arch, and Christ the dome which crowns the whole, while the work of the Holy Spirit, like the ascending spire, leads us to heaven. *H. B. Smith.*

The revelation of the Trinity comes from God, the source of reason, and, therefore, must, in its inner centre, be absolutely congruous with God, with his works, with us, and with all else in the universe. The Bible from beginning to end reveals God as one. He is one because one substance, one glorious Spirit; and one substance is the foundation of his glorious attributes. He is one because the three persons have an inner oneness. The Father is in the Son; the Son is in the Father; the Father and Son are in the Spirit; the Spirit is in the Father and the Son. One in their exterior unity, because together they constitute one supreme majesty; the creator, preserver and governor of the moral universe is the one God. There is, too, an absolute unity of purpose, of plan, of co-operation, of method, of work in perfect harmony to one glorious end. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are this one God. The Bible is full of this truth. From Genesis to Revelation it is implied, asserted and inwoven into the texture of the Bible, as the soul is in the body. There is a revelation as to unity, but there is more as to Trinity. *Three persons* stand face to face with one another; they are objective to one another. They look at, individualize, love, speak to, command one another; they form a plan with one another; they distribute the functions of office by mutual plans, and with these distinctive functions they work together at the same plan, and go out and come in, and rejoice with one another. God is revealed as a Trinity; he is revealed as a unity, and the unity is tri-personality—three distinct persons—Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God. *A. A. Hodge.*

The threefold personality of God has its ground in the one, eternal, indivisible essence. In three human persons there are three separate and independent natures or essences; in the three Divine Persons there is but one and the same numerical nature or essence. In the latter case, therefore, the word Person is not used in the same exact way as in the former, but only to denote such a threefold distinction in the one Divine nature as connects itself with personal properties and acts, without affecting the indivisible oneness. Calvin therefore said, repeating a thought of Augustine, that "the word Person was extorted by necessity, by reason of the poverty of language on so great a subject; not for the sake of expressing what God is, but to avoid passing over, in total silence, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three." *W. Lord.*

There is one Divine nature or essence common unto three Persons, incomprehensibly united and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every Divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual existence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting His own, and a Son receiving His Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence. *Barrow.* ——The essence of the Godhead is common to the several Persons. They have a common in-

telligence, will, and power. There are not in God three intelligences, three wills, three efficiencies. The three are one God, and therefore have one mind and will. In man the soul and body are distinct, yet while united they have a common life. We distinguish between the acts of the intellect and the acts of the will, and yet in every act of the will there is an exercise of the intelligence ; as in every act of the affections there is a joint action of the intelligence and will. These are illustrations of the fact that in other and entirely different spheres there is this community of life in different subsistences. This fact of the intimate union, communion, and inhabitation of the Persons of the Trinity is the reason why everywhere in Scripture, and instinctively by all Christians, God as God is addressed as a Person, in perfect consistency with the Tri-personality of the Godhead. *C. Hodge.*

It is an abstract and self-evident truth that no being can be one and three at the same time and in the same sense ; and, therefore, to affirm this, would be to contradict a self-evident proposition, and to maintain a palpable absurdity. But this is not the doctrine of the Trinity, nor does it bear any semblance to it. The doctrine that in the Godhead there are distinctions in personal consciousness, combined with identity of nature and attributes, is nothing more than to affirm that a being may be singular in one sense and plural in another ; and this involves no contradiction. It is perfectly consistent with abstract truth, and is illustrated by actual truth ; we have numerous illustrations of it in the phenomena of Nature. In the constitution of a human being we have a conjunction of unity and plurality. A human being is one, but his nature is twofold. *W. Cooke.*——It is no contradiction to say that in different respects the three may be one ; that is, that in respect of persons they shall be three, and in respect of Godhead, essence, or nature they shall be one. The manner of the thing is a perfectly distinct question, and its incomprehensibility proves nothing but that we are finite creatures and not God. *R. Watson.*——If the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us that there is but one true God ; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the same Divine attributes, the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence ; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honors, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid to them all—this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery. *Barrow.*

If God reveal himself to the world as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it is because he *is* what he reveals himself as being. The Trinity of revelation implies and presupposes the Trinity of inward being which it thus makes manifest. The eternal generation of the Son and procession of the Spirit involve a Divine impulse from eternity to creation and redemption. In like manner the Trinity of revelation has ontological elements. If love be the essence of the Divine nature, the impulse to revelation is inherent in it. In other words, God's actions *without* imply *inward* workings and revelations, and His inward actions and revelations are the necessary premises and preparations for His outward working. In revelation God reveals *himself*, and the impulse of self-manifestation belongs to His inmost being. *Christlieb.*

When we think of God, the ever-blessed object of trust and worship, we think of a Being who is one, yet not single. Our God reveals himself as eternally capable of the most perfect blessedness, because he was never solitary, even when alone. Before creation began to rise, within the awful depths of an eternity where nothing was save God, we already discern at the heart of the infinite Deity this sacred companionship. God is not now—he never was—simply and solely "I." *Dykes.*

We see in the Trinity the sublimest and completest theory of God—a God whose nature is neither diffracted by multiplicity, nor yet concluded in singularity ; a God whose essence is not to be sought in lone seclusion, but in everlasting self-communication ; whose being is a unit, and yet a process—a process of which the two associated names, Son and Holy Ghost, are the august terms and the perfect method ; a God who allies Himself with finite intelligence by the co-eternal, mediating word, and reflects Himself in human nature and enchurches Himself in human society by the ever-proceeding sanctifying Spirit. *Robie.*

The social quality inheres in personality. All life is both self-affirmative and self-communicating. Here, so far as we can discover it, is the deeper and necessary ground of the Trinity in the Being of God. God is not solitary, but social, in the essential constitution of His being. There has always been in Him an active commerce of thought and affection. He has existed from all eternity in a life of self-communication, not of pure self-contemplation. And this social propensity is the ultimate spring of creation.

Not for possession, but for communication of Himself, and for the fellowship resulting therefrom, did God create the world and man. And when man responds to this movement of the Divine mind and heart, by the fellowship of a voluntary conformity to God's holy will, he answers the end of his created being. *Behrends.*

*Practical Basis of the Doctrine.*

The primary Scriptural aspect of the doctrine of the Trinity is not speculative but practical. In the Scriptures it is a great truth, underlying the whole Christian revelation, God as Father, the source of Redemption ; God as Son, achieving Redemption ; God as the Holy Spirit, applying the Redemption to man. It is not a barren, abstract truth, but vital, interwoven with the whole Christian economy. The doctrine has always been vital in Christendom, the source of the life and power of Christianity. We find God in the plan, God in the work, God in the carrying into execution of the economy of Redemption. *H. B. Smith.*

We are to seek the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity in that which constitutes the peculiarity of the Christian system, that it is a scheme of redemption. It is in our conscious experience of this redemption, considering this consciousness as connected with the whole Christian scheme, that we find the true basis for this doctrine. We cannot find it in the different relations which God sustains to the world, nor can we reach it by any philosophical division we may make of God's natural attributes, nor by any reflection upon our natural and necessary conceptions of God. It is not in Natural Theology, it is not in the general relation of God to the world, that we are to seek the basis of the Trinity ; it is found only in connection with the Christian system of redemption. *Twesten.*——The Trinity of God is the necessary groundwork of the whole Scripture doctrine of the atonement for sin, or the reconciliation between God and man. Transgression has introduced between God and man a new element and a new relation. Sin is not an act only, but a state, a state of the individual and a state of the race. Hence the great need of the race was that God should come into it anew in a quickening, healing, life-giving, personal mediation. Lost humanity was to be restored, how plainly ! only by an incarnation of God Himself in the Son, making a perfect union of it with His own Spirit by the " Word made flesh." The Holy Spirit ever comes, from the Father and the Son, to make the whole work effectual for the Church and the heart. We behold, we begin at least to behold, why God is forever One—is forever Three. *Sherlock.*——It is the basis of atonement for sin by Divine sacrifice, and regeneration of the soul by Divine influence. Only a Divine Saviour could make atonement for sin ; only a Divine Spirit can give life to the soul. Hence these doctrines stand or fall with the doctrine of the Trinity. It is essential to the true spiritual worship of God. We worship the Father, through the Son, in the communion of the Holy Ghost. *Robie.*

The great advantage which the Christian perceives to belong to him in this doctrine of a Trinity is - the covenanted, certain, and unchangeable purpose of the whole Godhead both in establishing the means, and in securing the end, of his eternal salvation. He perc ives that the means are equal to the end, and that the end must be the result of the means ; because the great Agents who use the means are Divine and infinite, can neither be mistaken in their views, nor be disappointed in their purposes. Jehovah, " who fainteth not, neither is weary," is engaged, by an everlasting covenant existing in His Divine personality, to create, recover, and preserve the souls of His people. Nothing, therefore, can arise which hath not been foreseen ; no impediment thrown in the way which was not foreknown ; no difficulty but which was designed to be overcome. The great sin of Adam, that fountain from which innumerable streams of iniquity have overflowed the world, hath only rendered this covenant more illustrious, by proving that where " sin did abound, grace could much more abound," and that nothing, which concerned the happiness or misery of myriads of souls for everlasting ages, " is too hard for Jehovah." None but Jehovah could reconcile to Jehovah. None but himself had either will, or love, or power, to accomplish the reconciliation. *A. Serle.*——Yet how could the eternal Jehovah sustain toward us so many inconsistent or incompatible relationships—be at once our Brother-Man, our Spirit Indweller, our unseen Father—be Judge, Reconciler, Quickener, if Jehovah our God were one Jehovah and nothing more ? These economic relations of God to saved men do naturally lie in the threefold distinction of the Trinity. They form the several functions of the several Divine Persons in the one concurrent and sublime enterprise of man's redemption. *Dykes.*

All implanted wants are wonderfully satisfied in the Divine Trinity. In the absolute and one only Godhead all man's highest, purest, largest, most far-reaching conceptions, stretching away

into the regions of infinitude, eternity, almightiness, have their full and complete exercise. In the incarnate Christ, taking up our humanity, the longing for a personal, sympathizing, companionable Deity, is blessedly answered—and yet God is there ; there is no loss of the essential and veritable Deity. In the Holy Spirit, the natural desire of the devout mind to connect God with all the operations of the present world, the processes of creation, the welfare, renewal, revolutions, sanctification of the human family, finds its lawful verification. *Huntington.*—The good man that feels the "power of the Father," and he to whom "the Son" is become "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ;" he in "whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is spread ;" to whom God hath communicated the "Holy Ghost the Comforter ;"—this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the holy Trinity. No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mightiness of "the Father begetting him to a new life ;" the wisdom of "the Son building him up in a most holy faith ;" and the "love of the Spirit of God making him to become like unto God." *Taylor.*

The apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13 : 14) supplies to us what we may call the three great watchwords of the Christian faith—grace, love, and fellowship. There is a triple work ; there must be a triplicate of workers to perform that triple work, and each Person discharging his own individual work. And so here is the doctrine of the Trinity, that there are three great and effectual works to be wrought upon man. God the Father has undertaken one of these ; that makes Him real, and His work real. God the Son has undertaken another of these ; that makes Him real and His work real ; and God the Holy Ghost has undertaken to discharge the remaining one of these three, and that makes the work and the Person of the Holy Spirit to be alike real. *Maguire.*——The Church lives but by this truth ; for its life is in the indwelling of Christ, and were Christ not God, His indwelling were a fable and a mockery ; its life is in the abiding presence of the Spirit, and were the Spirit not a Person Divine, how were He thus universally to abide and to intercede without invading the deepest and holiest prerogatives of the Eternal God? how shall not the Church adore these as God who do for her, and are to her, all that her highest conceptions can imagine her God to be and to do? or in what terms shall she define her God which shall exclude the characters and properties that Revelation ascribes to her Sanctifier and her Redeemer? Her life is blended with the life of Christ and of the Spirit ; she breathes but by these Divine ministers of the Divine Father ; forsaking the blessed truth of their essential divinity she abandons the very charter of her existence. W. A. B.

### *History of the Doctrine.*

The Ante-Nicene Church held the doctrine in an undogmatic form, but a catena of their testimonies proves that the apostolic fathers made a large advance toward later definitions. All forms of early creeds direct Christian faith to Three Persons, as also their doxologies, such as that of Polycarp. Athenagoras repudiates the charge of atheism on the ground of believing in Three Divine Persons. Theophilus of Antioch gives us the term "Triad," used after him by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Hippolytus, and by Tertullian and Novatian changed into *Trinitas.* Tertullian's language is very expressive. "All three are one by unity of substance, and the unity is developed into a Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Origen is equally clear.

Very soon, however, heresies on this particular doctrine became rife. Praxeas (160-180) was the author, promulgator of *Patripassianism,* so-called because it abolished the distinction between the Father and the Son who suffered. But Sabellius (250) more fully developed the error, which from him was taken the name of *Sabellianism ;* and from his peculiar theory that of *Modalism,* or the assumption that the one Lord appeared first as Jehovah, then more clearly as the Son, then more fully and spiritually as the Holy Ghost. The general idea of *Subordinationism* took various forms, but on the whole the Ante- and Post-Nicene fathers labored to preserve the Monarchia, or unity of the Divine essence, by representing the Father as the Fountain of the Deity and its representative. They laid, however, great stress on the derived, but eternally derived, divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost. The term "subordination," which came into use at a later period, is an obviously perilous one, from the difficulty of admitting a subordination which does not include inferiority. *Arianism* took its name from Arius, who reduced the Son to a Divine creature, and taught that the Spirit was the first creation of that first-born creature, though he maintained that both were Persons, and much more intimately near to God than to the created universe. *Semi-Arianism,* which went as far as it

could in making the Son the unchangeable image of the Father, was not quite so solicitous to maintain the dignity of the Spirit. Macedonius of that party has connected his name with that of the *Pneumatomachoi*, or enemies of the Spirit.

The Council of Nicæa (325) against Arius, and that of Constantinople (381) against Macedonius, vindicated forever the doctrine of the Trinity ; the former in relation to the divinity of the Son, the latter in relation to the personality of the Spirit. The specific relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, however, was not determined till 594, when, at a synod held at Toledo, the term "Filioque" was added to the Nicene Creed, which, asserting the Double Procession, was one main cause of the permanent rupture between the churches of the East and West. The Athanasian Creed completed and fixed the ecclesiastical form of the doctrine, although it does not give due prominence to its redemptional aspect.

The schoolmen exhausted their subtlety on this profound subject, but added nothing of permanent value. *Nominalism*, which allowed nothing but nominal existence to the general nature represented by the individual as a specimen, obviously though unintentionally led to Tritheism. *Realism*, which asserted the reality of the nature behind the individual, was more faithful to the Trinity in Unity.

The communities of the *Reformation* retained the three creeds, and were generally faithful to the doctrine, with this difference in their favor ; their exhibition of the absolute Trinity has always interwoven with it an evangelical reference to the redemptional aspect of the doctrine. After the Reformation most of the ancient types of error reappeared in various forms adapted to altered circumstances. Socinian *Unitarianism* denied the divinity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Ghost. Sabellianism reappeared in *Swedenborg's* Trinity of Principles, and of the eternal God-man, and in *Schleiermacher's* Philosophy. Arianism, too, revived to mould opinion very extensively in later Christendom ; and subordinationism was exaggerated by the *Remonstrant* divine, especially those of the later age of Arminianism, and glided downward to Unitarianism. *W. B. Pope.*

*Hypostasis*, a term used in theology to signify *person.* Thus the orthodox hold that there is but one nature or essence in God, but three hypostases or persons. This term is of very ancient use in the Church. Cyril, in a letter to Nestorius, employs it instead of prosopos, *person*, which did not appear to him sufficiently expressive. The term occasioned great dissensions, both among the Greeks and Latins. In the Council of Nicæa, *hypostasis* was defined to mean essence or substance, so that it was heresy to say that Christ was of a different hypostasis from his father. Custom, however, altered its meaning. In the necessity they were under of expressing themselves strongly against the Sabellians, the Greeks used the word *hypostasis*, the Latins *persona*, which proved a source of great disagreement. The barrenness of the Latin language allowed them only one word by which to translate the two Greek ones, ousia and upostasis, and thus prevented them from distinguishing essence from hypostasis. An end was put to these disputes by a synod held in Alexandria about A.D. 362, at which Athanasius assisted, when it was determined to be synonymous with prosopon. After this time the Latins made no great scruple in saying *tres hypostases*, or the Greeks three persons. *Newman.*

A *trinity of deities* is common to all nations. The Emperor of *China* offers once every year a sacrifice to the Spirit of Trinity and Unity. Lao-tse (600 B.C.) says : Tao is by nature one ; the first begat the second ; both together brought forth the third ; these three made all things. We are more familiar with the *Indian* Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, who are represented and worshipped as three persons, though the original Divine principle Brahm is but one. In a commentary on the Rig Veda it is said : There are three Deities, but there is only one Godhead, the great soul. The so-called *Chaldean* oracle says, "The Unity brought forth the Duality which dwells with it and shines in intellectual light ; from these proceeded the Trinity which shines through the whole world." The names of the Chaldean Trinity are Anos, Illinos, Aos. In like manner we find a Divine Trinity among the *Babylonians* (witness the three images in the temple of Belus), the *Phœnicians* (Ulomus, Ulosurus, Eliun), and the *Egyptians* (Kneph or Ammun, Pthah, and Osiris). The divinities of *Greece* were grouped by mythologers both in a successive (Uranas, Chronos, Zeus) and a simultaneous trinity (Zeus, Poseidon, Aidoneus). So, too, among the *Irish* (Kriosan, Biosena, Jiva), the *Scandinavians* (Thor, Woden, Fricco), the ancient *Prussians*, the *Pomeranians*, the *Wends*, and the old *Americans.* Do not all these coincidences serve as an indirect proof to compel us to acknowledge that Schelling was right when he said, "The philosophy of mythology proves that a Trinity of Divine potentialities is the root

from which have grown the religious ideas of all nations of any importance that are known to us? . . . This idea does not exist because there is such a thing as Christianity ; on the contrary, Christianity exists because this idea is the most original of all." *Christlieb.*

2. JEHOVAH-ELOHIM.

**2 : 7. The Lord God,** or, in Hebrew, *Jehovah-Elohim.* This name is here given to God, after he had been called simply Elohim. Elohim signifies the majesty, power, greatness, and glory of God, in the domain of creation. Jehovah indicates the covenant-relation in which he has placed himself with the better part of the children of men, and points to the plan of salvation which he purposed to accomplish on their behalf, and which in the fullness of time he actually effected. C. G. B.——The sacred writer, having recorded the creation as the act of God, giving to Him then His generic name as the Supreme Being, now passes to the more personal history of man and his immediate relation to his Maker, and therefore introduces the more personal name of God, the name by which He became afterward known to the patriarchs, as *their* God. The union of the two names JEHOVAH Elohim throughout chapters 2 and 3 is singularly appropriate, as indicating that the Elohim of the first chapter is the same as the JEHOVAH who appears afterward in the fourth chapter, and from time to time throughout the history. E. H. B.

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures two chief names are used for the one true divine Being—ELOHIM, commonly translated GOD in our version, and JEHOVAH, translated LORD. ELOHIM is the plural of ELOAH (in Arabic *Allah*), a form which occurs only in poetry and a few passages of later Hebrew (Neh. 9 : 17 ; 2 Chr. 32 : 15). P. S.——It does not occur in the singular in the earlier books of Scripture, except in the abbreviated form of El. The word is a title rather than a name. It is applied to false gods, as well as to the true. The heathen nations round about the Israelites would have recognized the existence and the divinity of El and of the Elohim.

JEHOVAH, on the contrary, is as clearly a proper name as Jupiter or Vishnu. *Elohim* and *Jehovah* are therefore as distinguishable as *Deus* and *Jupiter ;* the difference being only in this, that, whereas the worshippers of Jupiter admitted "gods many and lords many," a multitude of *Dii*, the worshippers of Jehovah, on the other hand, believe in no Elohim except JEHOVAH. E. H. B.

Where in the Old Testament, in our translation, the word "God" stands, there in the Hebrew is the word "Elohim." Where the word "Lord" occurs, it is commonly in Heb. "Jehovah." Elohim is properly a plural, "the Beings to be feared ;" it has, however, the verb in the singular. Elohim is the more general name, answering somewhat to our word "Deities," and is therefore used also of the gods of the heathen. This more general word "God" describes the Almighty in his relation as Creator and Lord of the world, whose "eternal power and godhead" might be known by the heathen, as declared in the works of creation. The word "Jehovah" represents always the living, personal God, *in His revealed character, in His covenanted relations to man. Gerl.*

JEHOVAH. As is well known, the proper vowels of this most difficult and important of all the divine names are lost. Expressed without vowels, its consonants stand thus : Y-H-V-H. Judging from its relation to the Hebrew word *Eyeh* in Ex. 3 : 13, it is now most frequently vocalized thus by scholars : YAHVEH. Its derivation from the verb of "being" suggests as its root-idea the highly abstract conception of the divine self-existence. From the root-idea of "being, undetermined from without," flow the two characteristics of God as the God of the covenant : (1) freedom or sovereignty in His self-determination ; and (2) consistency or faithfulness, unchangeableness, in His self-determination. As free to choose, and yet as bound by His choice or promise, he is Jehovah—the Covenant God. *Dykes.*

Even the patriarchs, who were led by a Divine light, recognized God rather as El Shaddai, God Almighty, than in his character of Jehovah. Yet in no age from the call of Abraham was this latter name altogether unknown, though in general so dimly apprehended, that at the time of the Exodus, it had, as it were, to be announced anew. To Abraham its import was made particularly apparent in the transaction of Moriah ; and both the name of the locality and the proverb connected with it—"Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh (Jehovah will see), as it is said to this day, In the mount of Jehovah he will appear" (Gen 22 : 14), show that it was a standing memorial in Israel of the Patriarchal age. How Abraham himself viewed the revelation then made to him, appears not only from the name Moriah, but also from his subsequent constant use of the name Jehovah, as, for instance, JEHOVAH-ELOHIM of heaven and JEHOVAH-ELOHIM of earth (Gen. 24 : 3, 12), so that even the patri-

arch's servant spoke of God as JEHOVAH-ELOHIM of his master (ver. 12), and strangers like Laban recognized the servant as the 'blessed of JEHOVAH' (ver. 31). This is the more remarkable, because previously Abraham designated God variously as JEHOVAH EL ELYON, ADONAI JEHOVAH, ADONAI, and ELOHIM. So also Isaac refers to JEHOVAH as the author of blessings on nature, and to EL SHADDAI as the source of blessing on Jacob; and Jacob himself is seen in the closing scene of his history, waiting in faith for the salvation to be wrought through this deliverer: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Jehovah." D. M.

The names Elohim and Jehovah are not synonymous, and cannot be so used. The one expresses the genus, the other stands for the individual, and is a proper name. Elohim answers to our own word *God* or *Deity*, and is therefore used of false gods as well as of the true. Jehovah stands for the personal, living, self-revealing Being, and is explained in Ex. 3 : 14 and 34 : 6. It can be applied to none but the one true and eternal God, as is said, "I am Jehovah; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." This distinction is strongly marked in the words of Elijah, "If Jehovah be Elohim, follow him." Here it would be impossible to interchange Elohim and Jehovah, or to say, "if Baal be Jehovah." There is an essential difference in signification, and, though sometimes either might be used, yet there are cases where there is a peculiar propriety in using one rather than the other, and there are other cases in which one must be used, and the other cannot. In the first chapter of Genesis Moses might have used either Elohim or Jehovah, except in the 27th verse, where Elohim was compulsory. But in the opening of the Divine teaching it was necessary to make clear that God is Creator, that the world was not eternal, nor independent; and also that Jehovah is not one among many—not the national God of the Hebrews—but that Jehovah the self-revealer and Elohim the Almighty Creator are one. Therefore in the first chapter Elohim is used throughout. The Deity is the Creator. But in approaching that part of the narrative where the personal God enters into relations with man, and where Jehovah was necessary, Moses unites the names, Jehovah Elohim. The union proves identity, and this being proved, Moses sometimes employs Jehovah, sometimes Elohim, as occasion, propriety and the laws of the Hebrew language require. *McCaul.*

From an examination of parallel passages containing the remarkable designation, Jehovah-Elohim, it appears that the two terms are *in apposition;* the combination being thus equivalent to "Jehovah, who is Elohim." An explanation or paraphrase of the designation is probably contained in such passages as Ps. 18 : 32; Isa. 44 : 6; Deut. 32 : 30. This view is fully confirmed by the only other passage in the Pentateuch where the same combination occurs (Ex. 9 : 30): "I know ye will not fear Jehovah-Elohim." So also in 1 Kings 18 : 21, Elijah represents that the great issue between the worshippers of the true God and of Baal was whether Jehovah or Baal was *Ha-Elohim*—the proper Elohim. D. M.

In reading the Scriptures, the Rabbins substituted for Jehovah the word ADONAI (*Lord*), from the translation of which by Kurios in the LXX., followed by the Vulgate, which uses *Dominus*, we have got the LORD of our Version. Our translators have, however, used JEHOVAH in four passages (Ex. 6 : 3; Psalm 83 : 18; Is. 12 : 2; 26 : 4), and in the compounds *Jehovah-Jireh*, *Jehovah-Nissi*, and *Jehovah-Shaiom* (*Jehovah shall see*, *Jehovah* is *my Banner*, *Jehovah* is *Peace*); while the similar phrases *Jehovah-Tsidkenu* and *Jehovah-Shammah* are translated, "the LORD our righteousness," and "the Lord is there" (Jer. 23 : 6; 33 : 16; Ezek. 48 : 35). In one passage the abbreviated form JAH is retained (Psalm 68 : 4). The substitution of the word LORD is most unhappy; for, while it in no way represents the meaning of the sacred name, the mind has constantly to guard against a confusion with its lower uses, and, above all, the direct personal bearing of the name on the revelation of God through the whole course of Jewish history is kept injuriously out of sight. P. S.——The characteristic Divine name, Jehovah, occurs in the Old Testament (A. V.) in seven places, in three of which it is in composition, as Jehovah-Shalom (Judg. 6 : 24). This number has been considerably increased in the revision, but the American Committee think that the change should be universal. It is well known that the Jews cherished a superstitious dread of this name, and while preserving its radical letters altered the vowels, so that it is not altogether a settled question what those vowels were, though all admit that they were not those represented by our English word Jehovah. Most modern scholars propose to express them by the form *Jahveh*. The Greek translators did not transfer the word, but rendered it uniformly by kurios, and the English translators copied their example by rendering with the exceptions noted, LORD; and where

this occurred in connection with another Hebrew word signifying Lord, they rendered the compound phrase "Lord GOD," thus completely hiding from the ordinary reader the full force of the term. For "Lord" simply conveys the ideas of authority, power and majesty, which are abundantly conveyed by other terms, such as *El Shaddai*. As is well known, *God* is the ordinary title given to the Creator as supreme and the object of worship, in which sense it is applied to the gods of the heathen; but *Jehovah* belongs alone to the God of Israel who revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and it is never applied to any other deity. There are Gods many, or many that are so called, but there is only one Jehovah. This is the incommunicable name. There are differences of opinion as to its exact meaning, but there is no difference as to its being the chosen and characteristic appellation of the God of the Scriptures, the One who revealed himself to his people and entered into covenant with them. Elohim is the God of nature, the creator and preserver of men, but Jehovah is the God of revelation and redemption; and this wealth of meaning in the latter term is increased if we regard it as involving the ideas of eternal and immutable self-existence which its derivation is generally considered to imply. *Chambers.*

## Section 18.

### MAN: CREATION; NATURE; ORIGINAL CONDITION.

GENESIS 1:26, 27; 2:7.

1:26 AND God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have
dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over
27 all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created
man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he
them.
2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils
the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

**26. Man.** Here the language is definite, "the man," and in the first half of the verse the pronoun is singular and masculine, intimating that at first only one human being and that one the male was created. Then the writer as briefly and clearly describes the subsequent distinction into sexes. And in noticing this fact there is something peculiar, for with regard to fish or beasts or cattle he does not mention that God created them male and female. With regard to man, short as is the notice, he does relate, first that "in the image of God created He him," that is, one male; and then "male and female created He them." *McCaul.*

Instead of saying, "Let there be man," as he had before said, "Let there be light," or giving a command to the elements to bring forth so noble a creature, he speaks of the work as immediately his own, and in the language of deliberation; implying thereby not any more intrinsic difficulty in this act of his power than in the creation of the smallest insect, but the superior dignity and excellence of the creature he was about to form. *Bush.*——The fact of Divine deliberation here, and here only, interrupting the continuous flow of God's creative acts, sufficiently indicates the solemnity of that which is to follow. Earth and earth's tribes were prepared; but now there is a king to be set over them,—one like them, but also unlike them: a complex being, made up of the dust of the earth and of the image of God. *Alf.*

Three times in v. 27 the verb *created* is used concerning the production of man; for, though his bodily organization may, like that of the beasts, have been produced from already created elements ("the dust of the ground," ch. 2:7); yet the complex being, man, "of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting," was now for the first time called into being, and so was, unlike the beasts, wholly a new creation. E. H. B.——Of the last work, the sacred record says, "God created Man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Three times this strong affirmation is repeated in the announcement, and three times "the potent word" *bārā* is used. Man's commission, as sent forth, was "subdue" "and have dominion," in

which all nature was placed at his feet; and being made in the image of God, he was capable of moral distinctions and of spiritual progress. He was thus above nature, while of nature. "With him begins the age of moral freedom and responsibility, that of the historical world." *Dana.*——After the further lapse of ages the elevatory fiat went forth yet once more in an act of creation, and with the human, heaven aspiring dynasty the moral government of God, in its connection with the world we inhabit, "took beginning;" and then creation ceased. Why?—simply because God's moral government *had* begun. *Hugh Miller.*

Three principal features in the Mosaic picture will ever claim attention from all thoughtful men:—1. The *cause* of all things: *God.* 2. The *order* of things: *a continual progress.* 3. The *final object* of things: *man;* not an individual *one* amongst the terrestrial creatures; but the very object and aim of creation itself. *Godet.*——Each divine act marks a step in an ordered progress culminating at last in man. Of him all lower creation prophesies; to him all lower creation tends. The vertebrate structure is the endowment of life with power; the mammalian function superadds love. But the plenary development of neither is possible till wisdom is bestowed through the human brain. Paleontology, like the Mosaic cosmogony, leads up to its "image of God." When man is made God creates no more. *G. Rorison.*——The record of creation relates specifically to the race of man. Besides being prepared *for* man, it concerns itself chiefly, if not exclusively, with what belongs *to* him. Of the creation of angels nothing is said. Respecting the starry heavens a brief clause is employed: for what are they all to man, in his present state, compared with the sun which makes his day, the moon which rules his night, and the earth on which he dwells? In the account of the vegetable creation, no mention is made of timber-trees, the giants of the botanical kingdom; the history is confined to the production of grasses, or food for cattle; to herbs, or grain and leguminous plants for his own use, and to fruit-bearing trees; all relating, directly or indirectly, to the wants and conveniences of mankind. Man himself is described as created last; plainly intimating that all which had gone before was only a means of which he was to be the subordinate end. And not only the process, but even its termination is made to subserve his welfare, for it is laid as a reason for the institution of the Sabbath. *An.*

In the appearance of man the system of life, in progress through the ages, reached its completion, and the animal structure its highest perfection. Another *higher* is not within the range of our conception. For the vertebrate type, which began during the palæozoic, in the prone or horizontal fish, becomes erect in man, and thus completes, as Agassiz has observed, the possible changes in the series to its last term. An erect body and an erect forehead admit of no step beyond. But besides this, man's whole structure declares his intellectual and spiritual nature. His fore-limbs are not organs of locomotion, as they are in all other mammalians; they have passed from the *locomotive* to the *cephalic* series, being made to subserve the purposes of the head; and this transfer is in accordance with a grand law in nature, which is at the basis of grade and development. The cephalization of the animal has been the goal in all progress; and in man we mark its highest possible triumph. Man was the first being that was not finished on reaching adult growth, but was provided with powers for indefinite expansion, a will for a life work, and boundless aspirations to lead to an endless improvement. He was the first being capable of an intelligent survey of Nature, and comprehension of her laws; the first capable of augmenting his strength by bending nature to his service, rendering thereby a weak body stronger than all animal force; the first capable of deriving happiness from truth and goodness; of apprehending eternal right; of reaching toward a knowledge of self and of God; the first, therefore, capable of conscious obedience or disobedience of moral law, and the first subject to debasement through his appetites and moral nature. *Dana.*

*The body.* Nothing can be conceived which would surpass the workmanship and the elegance of this fabric. It sets forth pre-eminently the Divine art—the art of God in fitting up a structure including within itself so many miracles. Whether we look to what is external or internal—to what is more essential, or to what is rather ornamental, we are equally impressed and surprised Nor is the comeliness more striking than the utility of the various parts. How beautifully and aptly subservient is every member to the great functions and offices for which it was designed! How adapted is the eye for the transmission of light—the ear for the conveying of sound—the hand for manipulation—the tongue, with its manifold appendages, for the utterance of speech—the bones for strength and support—the muscles for locomotion—the lungs for respiration—the heart for circulation—the brain for sensation and voli-

tion ! How adapted are the solids for incessant action, and the fluids for continual motion ! Not more remarkable is the multiplicity of parts which enter into the composition of the body—the connection between these several parts, and the variety of functions which the whole performs, than is the close dependence of one function upon another. Such is the construction of this wondrous mechanism as to contain within itself the means of ministering to its own growth and preservation. It can draw its supply of materials from without – can appropriate to its own use every form of organized matter, and can convert it by a subtle chemistry into blood, and by sending this through the whole frame can nourish and vivify and stimulate every part. Here is a mechanism which has no parallel ! Here is a workmanship which proclaims itself to be Divine ! Here are the clearest manifestations of infinite wisdom and benevolence--and the most glorious ! *Ferguson.*

In the last work we have God here giving His last stroke, and summing up all into man, the whole into a part, the universe into an individual ; so that whereas in other creatures we have but the trace of His footsteps, in man we have the draught of His hand. In him were united all the scattered perfections of the creature ; all the graces and ornaments, all the airs and features of being were abridged into this small yet full system of nature and divinity ; as we might well imagine that the great Artificer would be more than ordinarily exact in drawing His own picture. *South.* ——First, thou madest the great house of the world, and furnishedst it : then thou broughtest in thy tenant to possess it. All thy creation hath not more wonder in it than one of us : other creatures thou madest by a simple command ; man, not without a divine consultation : others at once ; man thou didst first form, then inspire : others in several shapes like to none but themselves ; man, after thine own image : others with qualities fit for service ; man, for dominion. Man had his name from thee; they had their names from man. How should we be consecrated to thee above all others, since thou hast bestowed more cost on us than others ! *Bp. H.*

The points clearly taught in the Bible about the origin of man are that his body was made out of pre-existent material, and his soul was created out of nothing. . . . The body is generated. The soul is created by God. At every moment of conception God creates a new soul. *A. A. Hodge.*——At its first formation the body of man, so exquisitely organized, was no more than a mass of inert matter, till the Lord God endowed it with vitality, and "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"—literally, lives. *Jamieson.*

As to his rational and moral part, he was not *formed*, but "*created ;*" brought into being by that mysterious energy which speaks existence out of non-existence. As to his material and corruptible part, he was—not created—but "*formed,*" fashioned out of already existing materials, "the dust of the ground." After his lifeless body had been thus fashioned, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ;" and thus the *created* and the *formed* taking union, "man became a living soul, ' a simply perfect man, new from his Maker's hand, and bright in his Maker's image. *Stone.*

"Man," says the Scripture, "*became a living soul.*" But the animals, also, are styled *nephesh hayy i, breath of life*, or *soul of life*, or *living soul.* It is the general term for *animation*, including all beyond matter, all the immaterial region, whether we call it *life, sense, feeling, thought*, or *intellect*, extending from the lowest sentient to the highest rational. As far, then, as this phrase (nephesh hayya) is concerned, we could predicate of man no superiority of origin or of psychological rank above the beast. Every thing depends upon the view we take of the different source *from* which, or different way *in* which the human *nephesh hayya* came. In the Hebrew account, the emphasis is not on the word for life, but on the manner of origination. "And *God breathed* into him the *nephesh hayya* and man *became,*"—that is, *thus* "man became a living soul," and, of course, a higher soul in proportion to the more specially divine and higher source from whence it came The animation of the other *living creatures* was from the earth, and through the earth, by the common vivification of the Spirit in nature, the Ruah Elohim mentioned in Gen. 1 : 2,—the brooding. cherishing, life-giving, life-sustaining spirit, which is the genial source of all physical animation. But *God breathed* into man the *breath of life ;* in a sense higher than the term would bear when applied to the animals, he made this inspiration or inbreathing to be the medium of endowment with moral, rational, and religious faculties ; still more than this,—over all, and above all, he made a *covenant* with him. The word is not in the first of Genesis, but its spirit is there, and the term itself is most expressly predicated of the transaction when referred to in other parts of the Old Testament. He thus places him above nature, not

merely in his psychological constitution, but in his objective relation to the divine. Here, then, is the crowning distinction between man and the physical world in all its grades of existence. And this is the glory of the human soul, that unlike the animal, it can be in this forensic or covenant relation to the universal law-giver. Deity binds himself to give his creature life and immortality. T. L.

The epithet which we translate *living*, the Arabic renders *a rational soul;* and none but a rational deserves the name of a living soul. For all other forms or souls, which are of an earthly extract, do both depend on and die with the matter out of which they were educed ; but this being of another nature, a spiritual and substantial being is therefore rightly styled *a living soul.* The Chaldee renders it *a speaking soul.* And it deserves remark, that the ability of speech is conferred on no other soul but man's. Other creatures have apt and excellent organs ; but no creature except man, whose soul is of a heavenly nature and extraction, can articulate the sound, and form it into words by which the notions and sentiments of one soul are in a noble, apt, and expeditious manner conveyed to the understanding of another soul. And, indeed, what should any other creature do with the faculty or power of speech, without a principle of reason to guide and govern it? It is sufficient that they discern each other's meaning by dumb signs ; but speech is proper only to the rational or living soul. However we render it, a *living*, a *rational*, or a *speaking* soul, it distinguisheth the soul of man from all other souls. *Flavel.*——Life is the one universal soul which, by virtue of the enlivening Breath and the informing Word, all organized bodies have in common, each after its kind. This, therefore, all animals possess, and man as an animal. But, in addition to this, God transfused into man a higher gift, and specially inbreathed—even a living (that is, self-subsisting) soul, a soul having its life in itself. "And man became a living soul." He did not merely *possess* it, he *became* it. It was proper being, his truest self, the man in the man. None, then, not one of human kind so poor and destitute but there is provided for him, even in his present state, "a house not built with hands." Ay, and a house gloriously furnished. *Coleridge.*

Man was made last because he was worthiest. The soul was inspired last, because yet more noble. No air, no earth, no water was here used to give help to this work ; thou, that breathedst upon man and gavest him the Holy Spirit, didst also breathe upon the body and gavest it a living spirit ; we are beholden to nothing but thee for our soul. Our flesh is from flesh, our spirit is from the God of spirits. *Bp. H.*——First God breathed the light of sense upon the face of matter ; then he breathed the light of reason into the face of man ; and still by the illumination of his Spirit he breatheth and inspireth light into the faces of his chosen. *Bacon.*

*Man's Dual Nature.* In man two elements were combined ; the one Divine, the other purely human—the one the *form of clay*, the other *the breath of Divine life* breathed into it. Thus man is of twofold origin. In respect of his *body*, he belongs to the animal sphere, and is the highest product of nature. In so far as a godlike *spirit* dwells in him, he is above nature, and the offspring of God. In virtue of this twofold character, he forms the link between God and nature, and is the representative of God, the Priest and the King of Nature. The indwelling of the breath of the Lord constitutes him the *image of God*, destined for, and capable of, Divine wisdom and power, holiness and blessedness. K.

The *dualistic* view holds that man consists of body (basar, soma, corpus) and soul (ruach, pneuma, psyche, animus), and of these two elements only. Trichotomy makes a distinction between *pneuma*, spirit, and *psyche*, soul, and holds that the latter is the sentient nature which we have in common with the brutes (understanding, desire, feeling), while the former denotes our higher peculiar nature (reason, conscience, will). The point at issue therefore is, whether these two terms, the animal soul and the rational soul, with their varied applications, denote two distinct entities, or are simply the names of two different powers of one and the same substance.——*Positive evidence of bipartite nature.* (1) The Scripture account is a plain statement of a material body framed out of the dust of the earth and the vital principle derived from God. There is not even a hint of any third factor in man's nature. Body and soul, these only, are mentioned. How could there have been an omission of the term for spirit (*ruach*), if that also had been included as a distinct element in the creative process? (2) Further, the way in which the terms *soul* and *spirit* are employed for the most part in the Scripture is decisive against the theory of trichotomy. It is true that the latter term is sometimes used to denote the higher functions or faculties of the inner man. But in general the two terms are used interchangeably, and often indifferently as parallel and equivalent expres-

sions. Mark says (8 : 12) that our Lord sighed deeply in spirit, and also records him as saying (14 : 34), "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." Both terms are used to designate the animating principle of the body (Jno. 12 : 25 and James 2 : 26), and both to designate that which is the subject of eternal salvation (1 Cor. 5 : 5 and 1 Pet. 1 : 9). Both stand for the life of beasts (Eccles. 3 : 19–21 and Rev. 16 : 3). Each is used over and over to express the whole inner man, the proper personal self. Both are applied without distinction to deceased persons (Rev. 6 : 9 and Heb. 12 : 23). They cannot therefore be regarded as distinctive hypostases, as separate constituent parts of man's natural constitution. (3) Moreover, the established usage of the Scripture is to recognize only a twofold division of man. The sacred writers speak of "soul and body" and also of "spirit and body," but they never discriminate soul and spirit. In one case, these two are placed close together, viz.: in Mary's Magnificat, Luke 1 : 46, 47.

> My soul doth magnify the Lord,
> And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

But the parallelism shows that both words mean the same thing. Our Lord's solemn utterance in Matt. 10 : 28 is pertinent here. "Fear not them which kill the body, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Gehenna)." Here it is plain that the soul and the body are all that there is of man. So in the interesting passage in the sixteenth Psalm, quoted and argued from by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2 : 25–31), there is mention made of only two elements, the soul that was not left in (rather, given over to) Hades and the flesh that did not see corruption. These two being provided for, nothing else was left to desire. *Chambers.*

From the point of view of Holy Scripture, man is a composite being, made up of two elements of opposite nature and origin. The being which resulted from the combination of these two elements is described by the expression "a living soul;" and thus, continues Genesis, "man became a living soul"—words reproduced by Paul almost literally (1 Cor. 15 : 15). This expression "living soul" is not applied to the breath of God considered in itself and as separate from the body, but it describes man in his entirety, as the result of the union of the two contrasted elements. If Holy Scripture, speaking of the soul, undeniably puts it in more direct relation with the breath of God than with the body, it is none the less true that it only gives the name soul to the first of these elements when looked at as the principle of life, and as the *animating principle* of the body (*anima, âme*). When that which was breathed into us is considered in itself and apart from the body, it takes the name of *spirit* (*ruach, pneuma*) Thus it is said in Ecclesiastes: "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" And Jesus said, after the resurrection, "a spirit (*pneuma*) hath not flesh and bones." The spirit then, in the Bible, means the breath of God considered as independent of the body; the soul is the same breath, in so far as it gives life to the body. By this we may understand how it comes to pass that notwithstanding the essential *duality* of the nature of man, the soul, in Scripture, is often distinguished from the spirit; and even how it is that when Paul wishes to describe the complete constitution of the human being, he places side by side these three words—body, soul, and spirit (1 Thes. 5 : 23). Observation and Holy Scripture agree then in this,—that they teach us to see in man a spirit united to a body, and which has become, by means of this union, a soul which is the centre of three kinds of life; that of a person, free and intelligent, the life of the soul, or *psychical* life; that of the sensations and of the organic activities, or *physical* life; and that of the aspirations and of heavenly communion, or *spiritual* life. *Godet.*

*God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* Herein is plainly taught the distinct personality both of man and God, and that each is a spiritual being capable of holding intercourse with the other. *Bowen.*——The intimations made at the very commencement of the Hebrew Scriptures with regard to man are not less distinct than those which, as already noticed, refer to the character of the Creator. The anthropology of the Pentateuch is as complete and explicit as its theology. Indeed, the one doctrine is viewed as the proper correlate of the other; and this is in entire harmony with the idea expressed in the very first notice regarding man, as to his being created in the image of God, or in other words, as to his constituting, not only the object, but likewise the chief medium of Divine revelation. The revelation of man is thus the revelation of Him whose workmanship he is, both as respects the old or Adamic, and that new creation of which the New Testament gives more explicit information. Thus it has been well remarked: "The doctrine of one personal, holy God, was not the only truth on which the law insisted. It unfolded, also, the true *doctrine of man;* his *dignity* and *wretchedness.* It urged not one of these great verities, but both; for only where the

origin and grandeur of the human species are fully apprehended can we hope to understand the turpitude of moral evil, and the real nature of the fall of man. The Bible tells us that there is in him a high and God-like element, that instead of having been fashioned in the lower model of the brute creation, he came forth into the world erect in stature, and impressed with the Divine similitude ; that in virtue of this kinship human life is sacred (Gen. 9 : 6), and that human spirits, on the dissolution of the body, return to God who gave them (Eccles. 12 : 7). D. M.——From hence we learn, not only the origin of those admirable faculties of man, especially in the light of his understanding and the liberty of his will, whereby he resembles his Maker ; but also from whence he had that intellectual soul, not out of the matter whereof his corporeal and animal nature was constituted, but of a higher and nobler extraction, namely, by creation. He breathed into him the breath of life. *Sir Matthew Hale.*

Man, as bearing the image of God, was made capable of knowing God, and further, of making Him known to others. He was so constituted as to be an embodiment of certain Divine ideas affecting primarily himself, and, ultimately, other intelligent beings. He was thus to be not only the object, but also through, or in consequence of, God's purposes concerning him, the chief medium of Divine revelation. The fundamental idea involved in this Divine image would seem to be that man, of all the creatures of God, was especially set apart for sustaining in the highest form a representative character and some peculiar relation to God, in connection with which the whole of the Divine perfections should be wonderfully and universally manifested. It thus corresponded entirely with the "intent," to which Paul refers in Eph. 3 : 9, 10, as the ultimate end of redemption. D. M.

We gather from this first chapter that God is a spirit, that he thinks, speaks, wills, and acts. Here are the great points of conformity to God in man, namely, reason, speech, will, and power. In the spiritual being that exercises reason and will resides the power to act, which presupposes both these faculties,—the reason as informing the will, and the will as directing the power. This is that form of God in which he has created man, and condescends to communicate with him. M.

God may be in man by *an image, a likeness* of Himself ; but *not* by an actual impartation of Himself, of His substance. His moral and rational *attributes* are communicable, in the sense of being *imitable;* but his nature itself is *in*-communicable. In this sense, He neither "*will*," nor *can*, "give His glory to another." God may be *imaged* in the *soul;* He may have His *likeness* there : but He cannot *be* in the soul by a literal impartation and commingling of Himself with its substance. A miraculous union of the human nature with the Divine has been *once* effected in the mysterious person of our glorious "Immanuel." Such a union cannot be effected in *a mere man* without rendering every Christian literally a true Christ. *Stone.*——The Scripture never speaks of the Divine image in man, but always of man as formed after the Divine image. And this indicates a profound principle of Biblical thought. It presupposes God to account for man. Thus by "the Divine image," the Bible does not mean those elements in man from which an idea of God may be framed, but conversely those features in the Divine Being of which man is a copy. If we read what the Bible says of God in relation to the world, and what of God in Himself, we shall get leading lines for its delineation of man ; always premising that of the Divine idea man is a created copy, not, like the Logos, an essential image. *Laidlaw.*

The brute creatures are gifted with life and will and self-consciousness, and even with some powers of reason ; but they have no self-determining will, no choice between good and evil, no power of self-education, no proper moral character, and so no true personality. God is the essentially personal Being, and in giving to man an immortal soul, He gave him also a true personality, self-consciousness, power of free choice, and so distinct moral responsibility. All this was accompanied at first with purity and innocence ; and thus man was like his Maker, intelligent, immortal, personal, with powers of forethought and free choice, and at the same time pure and undefiled. E. H. B.

We seek this resemblance in man's intellectual constitution, in his spiritual capacities and powers, in his moral faculties, and in that position of dominion in which he was placed to represent the Creator upon the earth. Man is a reasonable, personal soul, and in this respect is the likeness of God. J. P. T.——This likeness consists in his superior spiritual nature, which he has by direct communication from God. This spiritual nature, when free from sin, reflected in small the spiritual nature of God himself. When sin intervened, it lost its purity and dignity, its holiness and blessedness, but not its basis and form. Christ is the restorer again to it of the Divine image (Col. 3 : 10).

*Alf.*—Man is made in God's image as being gifted like his Maker with intelligence and with capacities for moral action—beyond comparison the noblest possible elements of being. He has the sense of moral obligation and the voluntary powers requisite to fulfil such obligation. He can find his supreme joy in voluntarily seeking the good of others, even of all other sentient beings, and in laboring even to the extent of self-sacrifice to promote their welfare. This is the pre-eminent perfection of God—the very point ultimately in which man is made in his image, and capable of becoming more and more God-like, forever approximating toward his holiness and blessedness. His intellectual powers are only the servants of these highest and noblest activities of his being. H. C.

Dean Graves says: "The expression of the image of God plainly implies the idea of the soul's immortality." He cites Abarbanel, Tertullian, Vatablus, Paulus Fagius, Edwards, Augustin, Poole, and Patrick as holding the same view. In the trial of our first parents, the threatened penalty of death clearly implied the promise of life as the reward of obedience. And the life, thus implicitly promised, must have been an endless one; otherwise death would have followed obedience as well as disobedience, and the distinction between virtue and vice would have been destroyed. E. C. W.

Man was formed, God tells us, in the image of God, after the likeness of the all-holy Trinity. Every power and faculty of the soul bore some trace of its likeness to its Maker. They were shadowy representations of some aspect of the infinite mind. In God all is one. His attributes are, even in thought, inseparable from Himself. His power, His will, His goodness, His greatness, His wisdom, His blessedness, are Himself. For He is one simple essence. The very Persons of the all-holy Trinity, in that mode of existence which belongs to God, exist in one another in perfect oneness. In this image and likeness of the all-perfect God man was made, his various powers shadowing attributes of God, which, although inseparable from God, we, as finite, can only conceive of (as far as we can conceive of them) when set before us apart. But so, the immortality of man is a faint shadow of the eternity of God; man's forethought, of the Divine providence; man's intuition, of the Divine intelligence; man's memory, of the Divine knowledge; man's imagination, of God's conception of all things possible, though they are not. More plainly yet man's will, power, desire to communicate himself, love, complacence, tenderness, justice, truth, are imparted copies of God's infinite perfections. Nay, those three especially, memory, reason, will, have, both in earlier and later times of the gospel, been thought to be a shadow of the all-holy Trinity in itself. *Pusey.*

On the theatre of Nature, unconscious life has been exercised, a slave to the senses. On the stage of history, the human soul has displayed the riches of life self conscious and free. In the Church (understanding this word in its most spiritual sense) there grew up, and has since developed itself, a new thing,—the life of holy love, realized in Jesus Christ, and by him communicated to us. Finally, in that supreme abode which we call heaven, this perfect life, divine in its essence, human in its form, will expand and radiate through matter then glorified. Existence, liberty, holy love, these are the characteristics of the three kinds of life which are ours either actually or potentially, and whose growth and development make up the whole sum of the life of man. Above simple existence there is free existence; above freedom, there is the life which, having reached the entire disposal of itself, sacrifices itself for love. Above this third form of existence we can conceive nothing,—we dare to say there is nothing, for God is Love. Through the possession of these three kinds of life, of which the first is in contact with the lowest steps in the scale of being, the last is an emanation from the Divine essence, and the second forms the link between the two others, must not man be the summary and compendium of life in the universe? *Godet.*

Wonderful in pathos is the appeal which results from all these considerations; to be felt rather than expressed in words. Man is God's child; man bears a signature Divine. Great things are expected of man: reasoning which approaches the quality of a revelation; service which requires Almightiness alone to exceed it; love that courts the agony of sacrifice; purity hard to distinguish from the holiness of God. J. P.

*Original condition of the first man.* It is sufficiently manifest that a human being, however mature in size and strength, entering on life without experience, would require some immediate and preternatural knowledge as a substitute for experience; otherwise he would be like the new-born infant in capacity to care for himself, and the day of his creation might easily have been the day of his dissolution. His very faculty of sight would be misleading, and all his muscular powers unmanageable. While therefore the scripture consistently and necessarily

ascribes to him a precocious intelligence and some linguistic development, as exhibited in fitly giving names to the animal world and in recognizing the contrast of his own solitude, there is a clear intimation of his practical inexperience in his being directed *by his Creator* to make the clothing of skins, and perhaps also in the absence of all surprise in Eve's listening to the speech of one in the form of a serpent. The scripture thus makes a fully consistent picture,—of one in the balance of the moral nature, with Augustine's "posse peccare et posse non peccare," yet without the formed character which will make the security of the ransomed; and, intellectually, of one entirely destitute of the industrial arts and scientific attainments, but with a mental capacity full grown. S. C. B.

——We cannot suppose that man was placed on the earth in ignorance of his own origin, or of the origin of the creatures by which he is surrounded, and of which he is at once the crown and glory. Doubtless Adam was well instructed in the history of creation; and it is most unlikely that he should have withheld this knowledge from his family, or that they should have failed to transmit it in some way or other to their posterity. We know that Abraham was the instructor as well as the governor of his household, and that the fathers possessed supernatural revelation. *E. A. Thompson.*

In the constitution of the first man, considered as a *sinless being*, we behold a creature whose every susceptibility and power tends to *enjoyment.* Regarded merely as a partaker of animal existence, the consciousness of life alone is the consciousness of enjoyment. Additional enjoyment was provided for him in the gratification of each of those appetites which relate to the support and continuance of life. As a percipient being, every organ of sense was an avenue of distinct and additional grateful sensations. As a reflective and rational being, the mere exercise and expansion of his intellectual faculties would occasion him enjoyment: improvement itself would be pleasure. The emotions of novelty and curiosity, of anticipation and hope, of cheerfulness and love, are only other names for happiness; and yet this is the only class of emotions of which unfallen man would be conscious. The consciousness of a power to will—of his doing what he did from choice—this was another and a deep source of enjoyment. And, then, the highest, the most exquisite of all, was the consciousness that he had done morally right, that he had acted in harmony with the objective and supreme will. J. H.——Peace, as God meant it, is the primitive state of humanity—a state toward which, though it has long since fled, humanity still ever yearns again; the hope of which forms the rosy fringe of the future, and to restore which is the effort and the aim of all true religion. *Ewald.*

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*The difference between a man and an animal is threefold.* In man we find: *First*,—A comprehending power, that surveys the universe, and all the capacities of its possessor, in relation to that universe. *Second*,—A sense of Obligation to do certain acts, and to refrain from others,—this sense arising spontaneously, in view of certain relations or results, and being distinct from those impulses of the affections or desires, which may belong to an animal. *Third*,—The power of choice, that gives, by its generic action, individuality of aim for a lifetime; and, in specific acts, determines whether the higher or lower nature of man shall rule. These three powers, with executive volition, make man the ruler of the world and the shaper of his own destiny, so far as choice and attempts are concerned. These three powers are all that we have yet found distinctive in the higher nature of man. If animals have either of them, we look in vain for the proof of it in the whole range of the animal kingdom. The beautiful action of the natural instincts—as the social instincts, and parental instincts—is often triumphantly referred to as proof of the moral nature of animals; but a full analysis of these instincts shows that they occupy an entirely different sphere from the three powers we have mentioned. In man these natural instincts call the moral nature into action, it is true; but in the animals, they need neither guidance nor restraint from obligation or anything above them. *P. A. Chadbourne.*

# Section 19.

## ORIGINAL ESTATE AND ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

We encounter at the threshold the question of *the original estate of man.* Was it, as the infidel theories assume, sheer barbarism? Was it mere "crude capacity," involving, perhaps, a protracted feebleness of pupilage? Or was it only infancy, more fresh than crude, infolded in the Divine arms, breathed upon by a Divine inspiration, and at once aroused and informed by the lessons of a Divine tuition? These are the three suppositions, or assumptions: which of them is the right one? Surely, not the first, which propounds barbarism as the primitive estate, since, as Niebuhr has affirmed, there is not in history the record of a single indigenous civilization; there is nowhere, in any reliable document, the report of any people lifting themselves up out of barbarism. The historic civilizations are all exotic. The torches that blaze along the line of the centuries were kindled, each by the one behind it. Nor yet can we accept the second supposition, which assumes a crude capacity, somewhat tardily developed. It offends our moral sense, to imagine the human race lying, even for a night, like a poor foundling on the cold door-sill of its future habitation. The third assumption must therefore be the true one. Humanity, we are constrained to believe, was born into its home and passed at once into its Father's arms, taken up with infinite tenderness, immediate provision being made for all its wants. The first man, made outright, must have been more than a puling infant, staring and stammering at what he saw. We need not reckon him a philosopher, but we must believe him to have been a man; somewhat infantile, doubtless, in tone, but not in capacity, nor in the method of his mental growth. R. D. H.

The theory of the evolutionists is that man is the son of a monkey; the philosophy of the Bible teaches throughout that he is a child of God. The former make out a supposititious history of what they suppose to be the several stages of unassisted progress from barbarism to civilization, and rashly conclude that man actually has risen by his own efforts, merely because they see no reason why he might not so rise under favorable circumstances. But according to the account in Genesis, man has *fallen* from a former state of innocence and happiness through his own fault in weakly yielding to temptation, and so plunging into corruption and wickedness. *F. Bowen.*

We are told that man, beginning his course as a savage, has gradually raised himself through what are termed the palæolithic, the neolithic, the bronze and the iron ages, each of which lasted for many thousands of years—until he reached the beginnings of our modern civilization. This opinion has been supported with especial zeal by those who adopt the hypothesis of man's evolution from the brute. Beginning our examination with the present condition of man, we find him in every possible stage of civilization, from the utter savagery of the Digger Indians of North America and the Weddas of Ceylon to the advanced civilization of the English speaking nations, who dominate the world. And comparing the present condition of the nations with what authentic history tells us it was a few centuries ago, we learn that while some nations have been steadily advancing in civilization, others have been stationary, and others, again, have retrograded. G. D. A. ——Nothing in the natural history of man can be more certain than that, both morally and intellectually and physically, he can and he often does sink from a higher to a lower level. This is true of man both collectively and individually, of men and of societies of men. Some regions of the world are strewn with monuments of civilizations which have passed away. Rude and barbarous tribes stare with wonder on the remains of temples, of which they cannot conceive the purpose, and of cities which are the dens of beasts. *Argyll.*——Savagery and civilization are the two opposite poles of our social condition, states between which men oscillate freely, passing from either to the other with almost equal ease according to the external circumstances wherewith they are surrounded. G. R.

Archæologists talk of an Old Stone Age (Palæolithic), and of a Newer Stone Age (Neolithic), and of a Bronze Age, and of an Iron Age. There is no proof whatever that such Ages ever existed in the world. *Argyll.*——Innumerable facts show that in any absolutely general sense we cannot rationally divide the pre-historic period into ages of Stone and Metal. . . . The Palæolithic period, as a distinct age, is rather a product of the imagination of over-zealous an-

tiquaries, whose fancies have been too readily accepted as facts by geologists. *Dawson.*——It may be and probably is true that all nations in the progress of the Arts have passed through the stages of using stone for implements before they were acquainted with the use of metals. But knowledge of the metals must have arisen at very different epochs in different regions of the earth. We know from the remains of the First Chaldean Monarchy that a very high civilization in the arts of agriculture and commerce coexisted with the use of stone implements of a very rude character. This fact proves that rude stone implements are not necessarily any indication whatever of a really barbarous condition. Assuming then that the use of stone has in all cases preceded the use of metals, it is quite certain that the same Age which was an Age of Stone in one part of the world was an Age of Metal in another. *Argyll.*

The several ages, as they are called, of stone, bronze, iron, and a higher civilization are not, nor have they ever been, ages in the progress of the human race as a whole ; but only in that of particular peoples or nations ; peoples in all these stages of progress living, not only at the same time, but often side by side—as did the English colonists, the Red Indians and the Aztecs in America two centuries ago. Nor does the passage of a people through one of these ages—the stone age, for example—necessarily require thousands of years. Where a savage people are brought into contact with a civilized one, they may pass through all these ages in the course of a generation or two. Such has been the case with the civilized Indians in our Indian Territory. "The Stone Age is not necessarily associated with antiquity. It is a stage of civilization, and not a measure of time." (*Southall.*) These several ages may be stages in a course of degradation, as was the fact, according to Sir John Lubbock, with respect to the Stone Age, in which many tribes of our North American Indians were found living, at the first settlement of the country by Europeans. G. D. A.

I set little value on the argument of Whately, that as regards the mechanical arts man can never have arisen "unaided." The aid which man had from his Creator may possibly have been nothing more than the aid of a body and a mind, so marvellously endowed that thought was an instinct and contrivance at once a necessity and delight. But I set still less value on the arguments of Lubbock, that primeval man must have been born in a state of "utter barbarism," on the ground that this is the actual condition of the outcasts of our race or that industrial knowledge has advanced from small beginnings, or that there are traces of rude customs among many nations now highly civilized. None of these arguments afford any proof whatever, or even any reasonable presumption in favor of the conclusion which they are employed to support : first, because along with a complete ignorance of the Arts it is quite possible there may have been a higher knowledge of God, and a closer communion with Him ; secondly, because many cases of existing barbarism can be distinctly traced to adverse external circumstances, and because it is at least possible that all real barbarism has had its origin in like conditions ; thirdly, because the known character of man and the indisputable facts of history prove that he has within him at all times the elements of corruption—that even in his most civilized condition he is capable of degradation, that his knowledge may decay, and that his religion may be lost. *Argyll.*

Barbarism is not a youthful crudeness, but a decrepitude, of society, not a wild exuberance, but a consumption, of life. Only this consumption, like that of a man's lungs, has its stage of hectic glow, and undiminished fullness of fibre, separated sometimes, by quite an interval, from the hollow cough, the sunken cheek and the fatal night-sweat. Sometimes, however, the consumption gallops. But slow or quick, it kills. Such is barbarism. Its law is violence, and its end is death. The noblest race of Barbarians who have a name in history, the Germans, overpraised no doubt by Tacitus, would never have civilized themselves, and, but for Christianity, which had as much as it could do to civilize them, would long ago have perished ; just as, in spite of Christianity, the Hawaiians of the Pacific, and perhaps the Aborigines of our own Continent, are now perishing, the physician having arrived too late to save them. R. D. H.

*Different Forms of Evidence.* The assumption by the advocates of a great antiquity for man that our existing civilization is a result wrought out by the human race as a whole, through long ages, the general course being one of advance from utter savagery at its beginning, is irreconcilable with the known facts in the case. The question under examination cannot be settled by any general reasoning upon what is assumed to be the nature of man and the necessary progress in civilization, nor can it be settled by a study of the existing condition of the nations of the earth, and their history for the few centuries which authentic history covers in the

case of many of them. In seeking an answer to it, we must make use of written *history*, so far as that is available ; and when that fails us, we must turn to the "*monuments*" and *tradition* and *every trace of himself* of every kind which man has left behind him in the distant past *Geology*, *anthropology*, and *archæology*, as well as *history*, traditional, monumental, and written, have a right to be heard. G. D. A.

Evidence bearing upon the antiquity of man may be gathered along several different walks of science, and these are all found tending in one direction and pointing to one general result. First comes the evidence of History, embracing under that name all literature. Then comes archæology, the evidence of Human Monuments, belonging to times or races whose voice, though not silenced, has become inarticulate to us. Piecing on to this evidence, comes that which Geology has recently afforded from human remains associated with the latest physical changes on the surface and in the climates of the globe. Then comes the evidence of Language, founded on the facts of human speech and the laws which regulate its development and growth. And lastly, there is the evidence afforded by the existing physical structure, and the existing geographical distribution of the various races of mankind. *Argyll.*

### *Testimony of History.*

The "primeval savage" is a familiar term in modern literature ; but there is no evidence that the primeval savage ever existed. All the evidence looks the other way. The mythical traditions of almost all nations place at the beginnings of human history a time of happiness and perfection, a "golden age," which has no features of savagery or barbarism, but many of civilization and refinement. The sacred records, venerated alike by Jews and Christians, depict antediluvian man as from the first "tilling the ground," "building cities," "smelting metals," and "making musical instruments." Babylonian documents of an early date tell of art and literature having preceded the Great Deluge, and having survived it. The explorers who have dug deep into the Mesopotamian mounds and ransacked the tombs of Egypt have come upon no traces of savage man. So far from savagery being the primitive condition of man, it is rather a corruption and degradation, the result of adverse circumstances during a long period of time, crushing man down, and effacing the divine image wherein he was created. Had savagery been man's primitive condition it is scarcely conceivable that he could have ever emerged from it. There is no historical evidence of savages ever having civilized themselves, no instance on record of their ever having been raised out of their miserable condition by any other means than by contact with a civilized race. G. R. ——In all regions of the world known to have been inhabited by barbarous and savage tribes, but which are now civilized, it is easy to show from whence, in what way, and at what period, they severally received the arts and polish of civilized life ; and that in every instance they were indebted to *others more improved than themselves* for all their acquisitions. From analogy, we may and must conclude that such will ever be the order of events. *Lindsley.* ——Civilization, as far as all experience goes, has always been learned from without. No extremely barbarous nation has ever yet been found capable of initiating civilization. Retrogression is rapid, but progress unknown till the first steps have been taught. E. H. B.—— All the evidence of history goes to show that as far back as we can trace the history of the Assyrians, Phœnicians and Egyptians, we find them civilized, and that too in a very high degree. Now, what right have we—supposing we could extend our researches no further—to infer that they were ever otherwise than civilized? or that their ancestors had been savages? None at all, unless it could be proved that these were not the most ancient nations in the world ; and that the nations from which they sprung had been originally savage. This none will attempt to prove. The civilization of modern Europe—of the Gauls, Germans, Britons, Goths, Vandals, Huns, Scandinavians, and the rest of the northern barbarians—was derived from the Romans ; as theirs had been from the Greeks ; and theirs again from the Egyptians and other Orientals. Prior to these latter nations, savage life is unknown to either sacred or profane history. *P. Lindsley.*

The country known to us, in part, as Armenia —the elevated region in which the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Indus have their head waters —is regarded as the cradle of the human race ; and this, among other reasons, because the most ancient traditions all point to this as man's starting-point, because this is the native country of the cereals which have furnished food for man the world over, and because ethnological investigations all lead to the same conclusion. It is here, and clustering around this as a centre, we find the oldest nations the only ones that have a history reaching back into the long past —*e.g.*, the Chinese, the Indians, the Persians, the Assyrians, the Jews, the Phœnicians, the

Greeks, and the Egyptians. G. D. A.—The teachings of history and archæology indicate that in Egypt, Babylonia, Southern Arabia, as well as among the Aryan tribes of ancient Bactria, the primitive condition of mankind was one of civilization. The Chaldeans, the primitive Aryans, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the South Arabian Cushites, the Phœnicians, the Phrygians, the "Pelasgi" (and probably the Chinese)—all set out as builders of cities and acquainted with the arts of civilized life. The first glimpse that we catch of the race in Egypt and Babylonia presents it as engaged in erecting pyramids and great temple towers, as acquainted with bronze and even iron, as possessing a written language, and already deeply absorbed in astronomy and medicine. The further we go back in Egypt, the more perfect is the art. We find all of these primeval peoples suddenly appearing on the scene together, and *with a full-fledged civilization.* That was *about* four thousand six hundred years ago. The Book of Genesis makes a precisely similar representation as to the beginnings of the human race. Before the Flood we find Cain building a city: in the eighth generation we have Jubal and Tubal-Cain; while after the Flood, Nimrod is associated with the cities of Babel, etc.; and Abraham, in the tenth generation from Noah, finds Egypt an organized State. We find the Aryan settled in villages; working in gold, silver, and bronze; in possession of domestic animals, harnessing horses and oxen to carriages; worshipping the "holy" Ahuramazda. The Cushite cities of Southern Arabia and the primeval civilization of China tell the same story. *Southall.*

"The scenes depicted in the tombs show that the Egyptians had already the same arts and habits as in after times; and the hieroglyphics in the Great Pyramid prove that writing had been long in use. We see no primitive mode of life in Egypt; no barbarous customs; not even the habit, so slowly abandoned by all people, of wearing arms when not on military service, nor any archaic art." (*G. Wilkinson.*) If to all this we add the architectural skill exhibited in fixing the casing-stones of the pyramid, and in polishing the marble linings of the several passages, and more especially the red granite linings of what is called the King's Chamber, we cannot but form a high idea of Egyptian civilization at that period. In view of all these facts M. Renan exclaims, "When we think of this civilization, that it had no known infancy; that this art, of which there remain innumerable monuments, had no archaic period; that the Egypt of Cheops and Cephron is superior, in a sense, to all that followed, *on est pris de vertige.*" G. D. A.

If man, as some affirm, has been on the earth a hundred thousand years, why are there no traces of him anterior to the organized and civilized communities in Egypt and Babylonia? If tribes, savage, barbarous and half civilized, had been inhabiting the valley of the Nile a hundred and fifty thousand years before Menes, we ought to find, if not their bones, at least their implements; and in the case of the more advanced tribes, as we approach the period of Egyptian civilization we ought to find some traces of their habitations and tombs. But behind the pyramids in Egypt and the cities of Erech and Calneh in Southern Babylonia there is *nothing* to indicate the earlier presence of the human race. And if we come to North and South America there is nothing to indicate an older civilization than that of Asia and Africa. *Southall.*—The oldest civilization of which we can learn anything with certainty outside the records of Scripture is the Egyptian; and among the monuments of this Egyptian civilization the grandest are confessedly the oldest; and the oldest form of Egypt's religion is the purest. So it is with the Assyrian and Indian civilizations, the written and monumental records of which have lately been disentombed. On our western continent the civilization of the empire of the Incas, in South America, was far in advance of that of their descendants in our time. The mouldering temples of Central America and the rock-cities of New Mexico tell the same story. Standing on the height of our modern civilization, and looking away into the distant past, the farthest objects distinctly seen are the pyramids and temples of Egypt; then the palaces and great cities of the valley of the Euphrates; and then the rock-hewn temples and old pagodas of India and China—all telling, not of savage man working up through sheer force of intellect from savagery to civilization, but of civilized man sinking lower and lower from generation to generation; all confirming the simple story of the Bible. G. D. A.

*Language.* What shall be said of human language, that mysterious, subtle, cunning instrument of thought? Science hesitates about its origin, whether to call it Divine or human, and is best satisfied, perhaps, to call it both. The conviction is irresistible, on the basis of any generous conception of God, that man, his "offspring," as Aratus and Cleanthes called him, cannot have been put to his lessons without a teacher, and can have had no other teacher than his Heavenly Father. Civilization, conse-

quently, was no belated and painful achievement of ages, but appeared immediately, as the joint product of God and man, the teacher and the taught. Precisely what form it took, in what lines it moved, and to what lengths it went, it were idle to ask. Suffice it to know, that every just postulate in philosophy invites us to the conclusion that human history must have had its beginning, not in barbarism, nor yet in mere crude capacity, but in a sensitive, athletic humanity, taking its lessons, whence its life was kindled, from above. R. D. H ——The two exclusively human endowments of language and the use of fire prove conclusively that man was originally taught by God. They could not have been invented except by a highly civilized people ; for without them, even a beginning of civilization would be obviously impossible, and man, if he was a brute to begin with, must always have remained a brute. The divine origin of one of them is indicated in the beautiful myth of the Greeks, that Prometheus stole fire from heaven. And of language, as soon as we perceive that it does not consist merely in giving names to things, but that it is an organic structure, marvellously complex and intricate, founded on a philosophical analysis of the elements of human thought, may we not well say, that it could no more have been a human invention than is the anatomical structure of the human body, but that in both cases the inventor and fashioner was divine? That mere savages, as yet hardly raised above their kindred brutes, and unaided by a divine instinct specially implanted in them for the purpose, could have invented both language and the use of fire, or could have taken the first step toward civilization without the aid of both, is a doctrine which can be entertained only by those who can believe in a chance development of all things out of mud. *F. Bowen.*

*Earliest Inventions.* If we are to assume with the supporters of the Savage-theory that man has himself invented all that he now knows, then the very earliest inventions of our race must have been the most wonderful of all, and the richest in the fruits they bore. The men who first discovered the use of fire, and the use of those grasses which we now know under the name of corn, were discoverers compared with whom, as regards the value of their ideas to the world, Faraday and Wheatstone are but the inventors of ingenious toys. *Argyll.*

*Earliest Religions.* If there is one thing which a comparative study of religions places in the clearest light it is the inevitable decay to which every religion is exposed. Whenever we can trace back a religion to its first beginnings we find it free from many blemishes that affected it in its later stages. *Max Müller.*——It is incontestably true that the sublimest portions of the Egyptian religion are not the comparatively late result of a process of development, or elimination from the grosser. The sublimest portions are demonstrably ancient, and the last stage of the Egyptian religion, that known to the Greek and Latin writers, was by far the grossest and most corrupt. *Renouf.*

A historic review of the religions of the ancient world lends no support to the theory that there is a uniform growth and progress from fetishism to polytheism, from polytheism to monotheism, and from monotheism to positivism, as maintained by the followers of Comte. None of the religions here described shows any signs of having been developed out of fetishism, unless it be the Shamanism of the Etruscans. In most of them the monotheistic idea is most prominent *at the first*, and gradually becomes obscured, and gives way before a polytheistic corruption. In all there is one element, at least, which appears to be traditional—viz., sacrifice, for it can scarcely have been by the exercise of his reason that man came so generally to believe that the superior powers, whatever they were, would be pleased by the violent death of one or more of their creatures. Altogether, the theory to which the facts appear on the whole to point is the existence of a primitive religion, communicated to man from without, whereof monotheism and expiatory sacrifice were parts, and the gradual clouding over of this primitive revelation everywhere, unless it were among the Hebrews. Even among them a worship of Teraphim crept in (Gen. 31 : 19-35), together with other corruptions (Josh 24 : 14) ; and the terrors of Sinai were needed to clear away polytheistic accretions. Elsewhere degeneration had free play. The cloud was darker and thicker in some places than in others. There were, perhaps, races with whom the whole of the past became a *tabula rasa*. There were others which lost a portion, without losing the whole of their inherited knowledge. There were others again who lost scarcely anything, but hid up the truth in mystic language and strange symbolism. The only theory which accounts for all the facts —for the unity as well as the diversity of ancient religions— is that of a primeval revelation, variously corrupted through the manifold and multiform deterioration of human nature in different races and places. G. R.

1. There is already ground for saying that in its idea of evil pagan religion is upon the whole

more pure in tone and more consistent with the teachings of enlightened reason, even, as we ascend into prehistoric times. As we approach the primitive periods in the annals of any historic pagan religion we find the conception of evil more and more that of our own sacred books. The prehistoric literature of these religions, so far as yet accessible, deals with evil almost wholly in its aspect as moral evil, while the pagan rituals of that early period are pervaded, as those of later times never are, with a penitent utterance that at times is almost in the phraseology of the Hebrew ritual itself.

2. When this primitive purity in the conception of evil began to change to its later and corrupt form, the first step of change was, as the evidence appears to show, that of the old dualistic religions, in which the origin of evil was found in the malignant interposition of an evil being, powerful enough to contest the supremacy of the universe, while the creation of evil by this being was his method of making war upon the author of all good. In this, so much of the original revelation on this subject was retained as concerns the fall of man and the introduction of evil on earth through the instrumentality of Satan, the tempter.

3. In process of further change those speculative notions began to prevail, in which ideas of physical and moral evil were confused ; the conception of evil as sin grew dim and feeble, and while pagan religions became more pantheistic or idolatrous, the sense of accountability, of personal guilt, was obscured if not wholly lost. In a word, pagan religions, in their history, are shown to have undergone processes of steady deterioration, in respect to the idea of evil, just as also in their idea of God.

4. If these inferences from what is known at present of the history of religions shall be justified by the results of further inquiry, as there is every reason to believe they will be, that theory of the origin of religion which is held by the extreme evolutionist school, will, it should seem, have to be given up. This theory supposes that religion began in a sentiment of wonder, as man in his earliest rise above the conditions of a brute became more intelligent ; that the next step of evolution was the worship of the fetish, in the form of any object that appealed to this sentiment of wonder, or the sentiment of reverence, or of fear ; that next came the worship of nature-gods ; then mythology and the deities of such pantheons as those of Egypt, of Greece, and of Rome ; polytheism becoming at last monotheism. This necessarily presupposes that all religious ideas were in the beginning crude and almost brutal, and that as we ascend into prehistoric times, they become more crude, and less in harmony with the reason and conscience of enlightened man. It is enough to say that the evidence thus far warrants us in holding that the facts are in direct conflict with this theory ; and these facts, as time goes on and investigation proceeds, will in all probability make it at last impossible to consistently hold any other theory of the origin of religion than that which finds it in that *revelation* of which the Christian Bible is the record and the repository. *J. A. Smith.*

Where science forsakes us, revelation meets us with an account of man's origin, state, and destiny, which is adequate and coherent, which explains all the facts, and commends itself alike to the reason and the conscience ; and the more it is sifted and examined, the more well-founded and irrefragable does it prove to be. . . . This account of man we accept because it is revealed by God, is supported by adequate evidence, solves the otherwise insoluble problems not only of science and history, but of inward experience, and meets our deepest need. *Pfaff.*

### *Testimony of Tradition.*

By means of authentic records, written and monumental, we have traced back the history of man about 4500 years. Beyond this date we have certain traditions, more or less universal. 1. *The Tradition respecting the* "Tower of Tongues." "This was among the most ancient recollections of the Chaldeans, and was one of the national traditions of the Armenians, who had received it from the civilized nations inhabiting the Tigro-Euphrates basin." (*Lenormant.*) This tradition, in its earliest form, has recently been discovered inscribed on one of the Assyrian tablets in the British Museum. 2. *Tradition of a General Flood.* "The one tradition which is really universal, among those bearing on the history of primeval man, is that of the Deluge." (*Lenormant.*) 3. *Tradition of a Golden Age.* "The traditions of almost all nations place at the beginning of human history a time of happiness and perfection, 'a golden age,' which has no features of savagery or barbarism, but many of civilization and refinement." (*G. Rawlinson.*) Under the guidance of tradition we can go back 1000 or 2000 years more—and there, we seem to reach his beginning, to come upon Primeval Man as he is starting upon his course ; and we find him—not the ignorant, brutal savage, destitute of all religion, which some would have us believe man to have been—but man enjoying his golden age, under

the immediate government of the gods, and in happy communion with them; and true science testifies to nothing at variance with this. G. D. A.

The Pentateuch contains the most ancient tradition as to the first days of the human race, the only one which has not been disfigured by the introduction of fantastic myths of disordered imaginations run wild. The chief features of that tradition, which was originally common to all mankind, and which the special care of Providence has preserved in greater purity among the chosen people than among other races, are preserved, though changed, in countries distant from each other, and whose inhabitants have had no communication for thousands of years. The only clew which can guide us through the labyrinth of these scattered fragments of tradition, is the Bible story. *Lenormant*

*Natural increase.* Considering the tendency of mankind to "increase and multiply," so that, according to Malthus, it would excepting for artificial hindrances double itself every 25 years, it is sufficiently astonishing that the human race has not, in the space of 5000 years, exceeded greatly the actual number, which is estimated commonly at a thousand [fourteen hundred] million of souls. Is it conceivable that if man had occupied the earth for the "one hundred thousand years" of some writers, or even the "twenty-one thousand" of others, he would not by this time have multiplied far beyond the actual numbers of the present day? G. R.——The known population of the world is much what it would be, according to recognized rules of the increase of our race, dating from the received chronology of Noah, and starting with six persons. Rough as such calculations must be, they wholly exclude the fabulous unbroken antiquity which some claim for the human race. It is calculated by M. Faa de Bruns, Professor at Turin, that, starting from the received chronology of the flood, B.C. 2348, and taking as the annual increase $\frac{1}{227}$, a number not far from that which represents the annual increase of the population of France, you would light on the net number of the population of the earth, 1,400,000,000. *Pusey.*

*Testimony of Archæology, or Human Monuments.*

1. That of the *Megalithic Monuments* and *Tumuli* found in various parts of the world. Mr. James Fergusson, in his "Rude Stone Monuments," states as his conclusion that the "Cromlechs" of Great Britain and France belong to the first centuries of the Christian era, and further, that "three fourths of these monuments have yielded sepulchral deposits to the explorer; and, including the *tumuli*, probably nine tenths have proved to be burial places." For the *tumuli* of North and South America no more ancient date can reasonably be claimed than for those of Europe.

2. *That of the remains of the Lake Dwellings, i.e.*, buildings erected upon piles, which have been discovered in the course of the last thirty years in many of the lakes of Switzerland and adjacent countries. An age of six or seven thousand years has been claimed for these remains, on the ground of the rude stone implements found in them. But (1) Mingled with these stone implements, others of bronze and iron occur; together with the remains of the horse, the ox, the goat, the sheep, and the dog, all domesticated animals; and wheat, barley and millet roasted and stored up in jars, precisely as is now done in these same countries; and very recently silver coins, of the eighth and tenth centuries, have been dredged up from the ruins of the lake-dwellings of Lake Paladru, in Southern France; (2) Pile-dwellings are delineated on Trajan's Column at Rome. Such dwellings have been common in many countries in ages past, and are still in use in some.

3. *That of the Danish Kjökken-moddings, or shell-mounds.* The great antiquity of these shell-mounds is contended for on the ground of the rude character of the stone implements found in them. "The whole argument which has been founded on flint implements is liable to these two fundamental objections: (1) That flint implements are a very uncertain index of civilization even among the tribes who use them; and (2) that they are no index at all of the state of civilization of other tribes who lived at the same time in other portions of the globe. The finding of flint implements, for example, however rude, in England or Denmark or France, affords no evidence whatever of the condition of the Industrial Arts in the same age, upon the banks of the Euphrates or the Nile." (*Argyll.*)

4. *That of the "Bone-Caves" of Europe;* in which the bones of man are found, mingled with those of the cave-bear, the cave hyena, the mammoth, the woolly elephant, and the reindeer, animals now extinct, or else no longer inhabitants of the countries in which these caves occur. If man was the contemporary of these animals—and the evidence seems to place this beyond reasonable doubt—the question presents itself, how long ago is it that these animals inhabited Central Europe? And when did they cease to exist, if they have disappeared alto-

gether? (1) The cave-bear and cave-hyena, once thought to be extinct species of these animals, and so, very ancient, more careful examination has shown to be identical with those now living. (2) The reindeer, now confined to Northern Europe, Cæsar and Sallust both tell us was common in Gaul (France) and Germany in their day. (3) The remains of the woolly elephant occur in great abundance in Siberia, in some instances with the flesh perfect, and in such a condition as to be eaten by dogs. (4) The remains of the mammoth are found in surface deposits and peat swamps, with the bones retaining a large portion of their animal matter, thus proving their comparatively recent extinction. And in confirmation of this, in the Smithsonian "Contributions to Knowledge," we are told that among the North American Indians, there are native legends which indicate a traditional knowledge of more than one extinct animal, among them the mastodon or mammoth. This much is certainly true, that there is nothing in the known facts of the case which demands for these human bones an antiquity greater than 4000 or 5000 years. G. D. A.

Mere rudeness of workmanship and low condition of life generally is sometimes adduced as an evidence of enormous antiquity; and the discoveries made in cairns and caves, in lake-beds and shell-mounds are brought forward to prove that man must have a past of enormous duration. But it seems to be forgotten that as great a rudeness and as low a savagism as any which the spade has ever turned up still exists upon the earth in various places, as among the Australian aborigines, the Bushmen of South Africa, the Ostiaks and Samoyedes of Northern Asia, and the Weddas of Ceylon. The savagery of a race is thus no proof of its antiquity. G. R.——We have absolutely no geological evidence, so far as the association of man with extinct animals is concerned, that the residence of man in Europe has been longer than 6000 years. *Dawson.*

### *Testimony of Geology.*

On one point the testimony of geology respecting primeval man is definite and unquestionable, and that is, that man is "the latest born" of the inhabitants of our earth. From time to time during the last half century the announcement has been made that human remains had been found in positions which demonstrated a much greater antiquity for man than had hitherto been allowed; but in every instance a more careful examination has proved this claim to be unfounded. Among the most noted of these cases are the following: (1) "Two skeletons found imbedded in the solid rock on the north coast of Gaudaloupe in the West Indies. A careful study has led to the conclusion that they are the remains of Indians, killed in battle not more than two centuries ago." (*Southall.*) (2) Human bones found by Count Portales, as *reported*, in the coral reefs of Florida. The discoverer of these bones says: "The human jaw and other bones found in Florida by myself in 1848, were not in a coral formation, but in a fresh-water sandstone, on the shore of Lake Monroe, associated with fresh-water shell, of species still living in the lake." (3) "*The Natchez man*," as it was called—a human pelvis found in the bottom of a ravine cut through the fluviatile deposit at Natchez, Miss., which Sir Charles Lyell estimated to have an age of one hundred thousand years. Professor C. G. Forshey, who subsequently examined the spot where this bone was found, says: "Probably this loam and the bone too had caved in from some point above and been washed thither. A dozen plantation burial-places and Indian mounds and camps had been exposed above for centuries. The probabilities are a hundred to one that this bone was not of the bluff formation." The conclusion of Lyell respecting the age of this bone is based upon another conclusion of his, that the delta of the Mississippi has been one hundred thousand years in forming. Since Lyell's estimate, more accurate observations on the rate of formation of the Mississippi delta have reduced the estimate of its age to 14,200 years according to Professor Hitchcock, or 4400 according to Majors Humphrey and Abbot, United States engineers, the latest authorities on the subject.——The last discovery of human bones upon which the claim of antiquity is based, has been made in Mexico, near the capital. Professor Newberry has weighed the reports and says: "It is possible that we have in these bones the oldest record of man's occupation of the continent, but no facts have yet been brought to light which prove that the deposit containing them was not made within a thousand years." G. D. A.

I must reject this supposed later Glacial age intervening between Palæolithic and modern man, and maintain that there is no proof of the existence of man earlier than the close of the proper Glacial age. . . . The archæological literature of the last ten years is strewn with the wrecks of supposed facts establishing the antiquity of man, but which more careful examination has shown to have been wrongly observed or misunderstood. . . . The evidence available

at present points to the appearance of man, with all his powers and properties, in the Post-glacial age of geology, and not more than 6000 to 8000 years ago. This abrupt appearance of man in his full perfection, his association with animals the greater part of which still survive, and his introduction at the close of that great and as yet very mysterious revolution of the earth which we call the Glacial period, accords with the analogy of geological science in the information which it gives as to the first appearance of other types of organic being in the several stages of development of our earth. . . . The most ancient man whose bones are known to us may be referred to a race still extant, and perhaps the most widely distributed of all—a fact which tells strongly in favor both of the unity and moderate antiquity of the species, while it is directly opposed to all theories of evolution from brute ancestors. *Dawson.*

With geological records of great uncertainty, and written records declared to be incomplete for this purpose, we submit that it is sufficient for us to show a near approximation between science and Scripture, and to express the conviction, founded on actual facts, that the more geology is studied and its facts ascertained, the closer does this approximation become ; already this is the case in the judgment of some leading geologists, for undoubtedly the tendency of modern observation and discovery has been to bring down and modernize the mammalian and prehistoric epochs. Finally, the matter stands thus—the exact age of man on the earth is not ascertainable by science, but science shows to us a number of converging probabilities which point to his first appearance along with great animals about eight thousand years ago, and certainly not in indefinite ages before that. *S. R. Pattison.*

*Testimony of Anthropology.* At one time it was claimed that certain human skulls which from the position in which they were found were regarded as the skulls of palæolithic men—"the Neanderthall skull," for example—demonstrated a great difference between these men and the men of the present day, and so a much greater antiquity for man than had hitherto been allowed him. A more careful and extended examination has led anthropologists to a different conclusion. "The most ancient of all known human skulls," writes the Duke of Argyll, "is so ample in its dimensions that it might have contained the brains of a philosopher." So conclusive is this evidence against any change whatever in the specific characters of man since the oldest human being yet known was born, that Professor Huxley pronounces it to be clearly indicated that the first traces of the primordial stock whence man has proceeded need no longer be sought by those who entertain any form of the doctrine of progressive development in the newest tertiaries ; but he adds they may be looked for in an epoch more distant from the age of those tertiaries than it is from us. "The newest tertiaries" are the oldest strata in which human remains have as yet been found. Professor Pfaff, of the University of Erlangen, after giving a tabular statement of the dimensions of a large number of very ancient skulls—palæolithic skulls, as they are called—collected in Great Britain and France, reaches the conclusion : "We see very clearly from all this that the size of the brain of the oldest population known to us is not such as to permit us to place them on a lower level than that of the now living inhabitants of the earth." And, he subsequently adds, "The brain of the ape most like man does not amount to quite a third of the brain of the lowest race of men ; it is not half the size of the brain of a new-born child. The same gulf which is found to-day between man and the ape goes back with undiminished breadth and depth to the tertiary period." G. D. A.

If man had lived on the earth contemporary with the oldest animal species, we ought to find not merely one skeleton or half a skeleton buried alongside of myriads of fossil sea-shells and fishes, but a fair show of specimens, so many at least as to leave no question as to his being a joint occupant with them of the earth as it then was. One or two, or even a dozen skeletons, gathered from every explored portion of the earth's surface, are too few for the base of a theory like this, because such scattered cases, in number so meagre, are always subject, more or less, to abatement from the following possibilities : (a.) The human family in all ages have buried their dead, and often, during the earlier ages, in rock-hewn sepulchres or in natural caves ; (b.) In all ages of the world men have been liable to fall into rock-fissures and ravines and to die there ; and to leave their skeletons to become fossil there, particularly in calcareous and similar rocks where decomposition or solution in water and new deposits are in progress ; (c.) Men have been wont to frequent caves for shelter, for safety in war or from persecution, and consequently might leave their bones there ; or (d.) Their bones may have been dragged into caverns by flesh-eating animals or borne into strange positions by underground currents of water ; or again, (e.) Since the historic Adam,

drift deposits have in some circumstances been forming under water, in which waters men have been liable to be drowned and their skeletons to become imbedded in those deposits. Changes of elevation may bring such deposits to view.

Such possibilities must practically nullify confidence in the proof of man's high antiquity from his bones so long as the specimens are so exceedingly few and even these few found only quite near the surface. This argument will be appreciated by those who duly consider, on the one hand, that if man were on the earth in those pre-Adamic ages, it is in the highest degree improbable that his population ranged at a dozen for the area of all France, and a few hundreds only to a continent—for what should forbid him as well as the lower animals to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth"? Besides, a population so sparse and consequently weak could have made no stand against armies of hyenas, leopards, bears and lions. On the other hand, the occurrence of human bones, in numbers so very few and so remote from each other, will be much more rationally accounted for by the possibilities above indicated. H. C.

*Conclusions.* Through a survey of Babylonian, Indian, Iranian, Phœnician, Israelitish, Lydian, Phrygian, Chinese, and Egyptian history, the history of man may be traced from authentic sources a little beyond the middle of the third millennium before our era; so that man has existed in communities, under settled government, for about 4500 years. The Scriptures, the mythology of almost all nations, and Babylonian documents represent primitive man as civilized. No traces of savage man have been found in what tradition makes the cradle of the human race. There is no evidence of savages ever having civilized themselves. The civilization found in Egypt B.C. 2600 might have been reached in 500, or at most 1000 years, if primitive man began his history in a state of incipient civilization. Assuming that there was a primitive language from which all others have been derived, there is no difficulty in conceiving that all the four thousand languages said to exist now have been developed within 5000 years. Nor do the existing diversities of physical type require us to assume a vast antiquity for man. The early Egyptian remains indicate five types. The rest may have been developed subsequently. The growth of population and the waste spaces of the earth, and the absence of architectural remains earlier than the third millennium B.C. favor the "juvenility" of man. G. R., *Argument of Tract* 8, "*Pres. Day Tracts.*"

The facts do not require more than seven or eight thousand years backward from the present, for the antiquity of man. This conclusion agrees with the facts of history, and is not in conflict with the chronology of Scripture. The tendency of modern discovery is ever to reduce the pre-historic period. By a survey of the measurements of the skulls of various races, and a comparison between the oldest men known to us and now living men, it is shown that man appeared suddenly, in all essential respects the same as the man of to-day. The total absence of proof of any transition from the man to the ape is pointed out, and the sufficiency and consistency of the scriptural account of man is shown. *S. R. Pattison.*

The sketch thus given of Primeval Man is complete enough to place beyond all reasonable question the fact, that he was no savage, just emerging as to body and mind from the condition of a brute; living in a damp, gloomy cave, and feeding upon the raw flesh of such animals as he was able to entrap, or master in open fight. But a being bearing the image of God, cultivating the fruitful earth which, in response to his labor, yielded an abundant return of all that was good for food; possessed of a language copious enough to give names to every living thing; subduing the earth, and having dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth; and having the marriage relation established in all the sacredness which belongs to it among the most civilized nations of our day, a most significant particular in Moses' sketch, when we consider that "one of the most general characteristics of the savage is to despise and degrade the female sex."

In view of all the facts of the case, the conclusion to which we come is that no sufficient reason, either scientific or historical, has as yet been given for abandoning what has been hitherto the almost universal faith, not of Christian peoples alone, but of the more enlightened heathen also, as manifested in their traditions —*That man was created some six or seven thousand years ago, and that he commenced his course as a civilized being, believing in the one only living and true God. G. D Armstrong.*

[Volumes to be consulted: Southall, "Recent Origin of Man" and "Epoch of the Mammal;" Dawson, "Fossil Man," "Origin of the World;" Duke of Argyll, "Primeval Man;" Rawlinson, "Origin of Nations;" and the clear, compact pages of "Nature and Revelation," by Dr. G. D. Armstrong.]

# Section 20.

## ANIMALS NAMED. WOMAN FORMED. MARRIAGE.

GENESIS 2 : 18–25.

18 AND the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an
19 help meet for him. And out of the gound the LORD God formed every beast of the field,
and every fowl of the air ; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them :
20 and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And the
man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field ; but
21 for man there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep
to fall upon the man, and he slept ; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh
22 instead thereof : and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, made he a woman,
23 and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh
24 of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall
a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be
25 one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

IN the first chapters of Genesis lie the foundations of all the life of the world : marriage and family, labor and raiment, city and state, civilization and art, the relation of man to nature and the world of spirit, nations, languages, religions, etc. There are rich and fruitful hints also for ethics. *Auberlen.*——Dear, oldest, and eternal traditions of my race, ye are kernel and germ of its most hidden history ! Without you, mankind would be what so much else is, a book without title, without first leaves and explanation ; with you, our family acquires foundation, stem, and root, back to God. And they are all taken in so simple, child-like a tone, from the mouth of the first tradition among the trees of the eastern land, and are set forth by Moses so true, and one by one as if he found them there, the echo of eternal times. *Herder.*

**18. Not good.** Above, it is said, "God saw all that He had made, and, behold, it was very good :" here it is not good, for no other reason than because all was not yet completed. *Gerl.*

**19, 20. The man gave names.** At his creation Adam was a man in the vigor of physical and mental life. He was taught of God, and not left to gather by slow experience all that he wanted to know. Language must have been supernaturally imparted to him. He had no means of acquiring it but from God. From the same source he must have derived the knowledge he possessed of the properties of the objects and beings around him. *Kit.*——In the naming of the animals by the first man we have not only the primary truth of his superiority to them, but a further indication that the gift of speech was not the slow growth of ages, but an endowment of man from the first, just as much as any of his other powers or properties. *Dawson.*——The paramount thing is certainly the *naming* of the animals. It was that he might name them that they were brought to the man. What is subsequently said implies that as he thus grew familiar with the life around him Adam became conscious how much *alone* he himself was. All that we observe of the divine method in dealing with mankind suggests that God would teach man to speak by putting him in the way of making and using a language for himself. The direct divine gift would be in the *faculty* of language. *J. A. Smith.*

Scripture obviously and unequivocally asserts the *divine institution of language.* It is not necessary to suppose that Adam was endued with a full and perfect knowledge of the several creatures, so as to impose names truly expressive of their natures. It is sufficient if we suppose the *use of language* taught him with respect to such things as were necessary, and that he was then left to the exercise of his own faculties for further improvement upon this foundation. But that the terms of worship and adoration were among those which were first communicated, we can entertain little doubt. In addition to the proof from Scripture, it should be remembered that the laws given by God to the first pair, respecting food and marriage, together with the other discoveries of his will recorded in the beginning of Genesis, were communicated through the medium of language ; and that the man and the woman are there expressly stated to have conversed with God, and with each other. Besides, in what sense could it be said, that a meet companion for the man was

formed, if there were not given to both the power of communicating their thoughts by appropriate speech? Further, the diversity of tongues occasioning the confusion of Babel, and the miraculous gift of speech to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, may render a similar exercise of divine power in the case of our first parents more readily admissible: for surely such supernatural interference was not less called for in the last instance, than in either of the two former. The writer of Ecclesiasticus affirms: When *the Lord created man, he imparted to him understanding: and speech, an interpretation of the cogitations thereof* (Ecclus. 17:5). *Magee.*

As far as we can trace back the footsteps of man, even on the lowest strata of history, we see that the divine gift of a sound and sober intellect belonged to him from the very first. The earliest work of art wrought by the human mind, —more ancient than any literary document, and prior even to the first whisperings of tradition, —the human language, forms an uninterrupted chain from the first dawn of history down to our own times. We still speak the language of the first ancestors of our race, and this attests from the very first the presence of a rational mind, of an artist as great, at least, as his work. *Max Müller.*

In the department of *language*, nature was found supplying man with images of the moral, the spiritual, and the Divine. Everything in creation represents a thought of God, for it must have been *thought of* by him. Nature is a great system of Divine thoughts eternalized, and externalizing themselves in things. Man came therefore to find that things, as the exponents of a universal mind, were here before him; and here to be the vehicles of his own thoughts—the exponents of his own mind. Whatever the subject which might occupy his thoughts, he found Nature had so spoken on the theme before him as to provide the very prototypes of the words he wanted. As a poet, a world of impressive images lay around him; if he reasoned, analogies crowded to his aid; if he theorized, prolific suggestions met his eye; if he worshipped, the finite and the visible referred him to the Infinite invisible. With the new ideas of Revelation, came a new demand on the materials of language. Besides the new words which would be thus called into existence, language would be exalted by the secondary or derivative sense in which it would be now extensively employed. That man was already in possession of a portion of *natural* knowledge was pre-supposed in the very fact of his being capable of receiving supernatural additions to it; for to that previous knowledge of Nature the supernatural must appeal, and on it must be grafted. Names, besides being descriptive of the natural qualities and uses of objects, extended their illustrative power to Divine things. Spiritual ideas had to be translated into human language; and thus terms which, before, had only a natural meaning, acquired a metaphorical and theological value also. *Ruach*, for example, signifying *breath*, came to mean also life, soul, spirit, Spirit of God; *aor*, light, was extended to mean knowledge, and security as resulting from knowledge, and happiness as flowing from both. Thus language was progressively moulded and enriched by Revelation. J. H.

**21, 22.** All that he saw were fit to be his servants, none to be his companions. The same God, that finds the want, supplies it. Rather than man's innocency shall want an outward comfort, God will begin a new creation: not out of the earth, which was the matter of man; not out of the inferior creatures, which were the servants of man; but out of himself, for dearness, for equality. As man knew not while he was made, so shall he not know while his other self is made out of him: that the comfort might be greater, which was seen before it was expected. If the woman should have been made, not without the pain or will of the man, she might have been upbraided with her dependence and obligation. Now she owes nothing but to her creator: the rib of Adam sleeping can challenge no more of her than the earth can of him. *Bp. H.*

The act, by which the woman comes into existence, is directly ascribed to the original Maker. A part of the man is taken for the purpose, which can be spared without interfering with the integrity of his nature. It manifestly does not constitute a woman by the mere act of separation, as we are told that the Lord God built it into a woman. And thus, in accordance with the account in the foregoing chapter, we have, first, the single man created, the full representative and potential fountain of the race, and then, out of this one, in the way now described, we have the male and the female created. The original unity of man constitutes the strict unity of the race. The construction of the rib into a woman establishes the individuality of man's person before, as well as after, the removal of the rib. The selection of a rib to form into a woman constitutes her, in an eminent sense, a helpmeet for him, in company with him, on a footing of equality with him. At the same time, the after building of the part

into a woman determines the distinct personality and individuality of the woman. Thus we perceive that the entire race, even the very first mother of it, has its essential unit and representative in the first man. M.

He to whom all modes are the same, chose one which should serve vividly to impress upon the minds of man and woman, their *peculiarly* intimate relation to each other. In other creatures there was no natural connection between the pairs in the very act of creation The sexes were in them created independently of each other. But in the man the union was to be of peculiar solemnity and significance ; it was even to set forth, as by a symbol, the union between Christ and his church. The fact of her derivation from man—a part of himself, separated, to be in another form reunited to him, was calculated to indicate and to originate an especial tenderness in their nuptial state, and its indissoluble character. *Kil.* — In the case of the animals, both sexes could be created side by side ; in the case of man, however, where marriage is intended to be a communion of soul in the service of God –where the education and training of the fruits of marriage for God's service and kingdom, the ordering and governance of the house and of the earth, formed a main part of the task imposed—there must the origin of the woman point to the indissoluble union by which two persons become one until their life's end. The woman was taken out of the man (and out of that part of him which lay nearest to his heart), in order to show that this union of soul in love extended to the unity of the flesh likewise—embraced all, both within and without, and, as a Divine ordinance, was indissoluble. *Gerl.*

Adam was first formed, then Eve, and she was made *of* the man, and *for* the man (1 Cor. 11 : 8, 9), all which are urged there as reasons for the subjection and reverence which wives owe to their own husbands. Yet man being made last of the creatures, as the best and most excellent of all, Eve's being made *after* Adam, and *out* of him, puts an honor upon that sex, as the glory of the man (1 Cor. 11 : 7). If man is the head, she is the crown ; a crown to her husband, the crown of the visible creation. The man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double-refined, one remove further from the earth. . . . The woman was *made of a rib out of the side of Adam ;* not made out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved. H.

**22.** *Brought her unto the man. Led, conducted,* that is, *presented* her to the man. Compare the Latin phrase *ducere uxorem, to lead, i.e. to marry, a wife.* The word implies the formal solemn bestowment of her in the bonds of the marriage covenant, which is hence called " the covenant of God " (Prov. 2 : 17), implying that he is the author of this sacred institution. *Bush.*

Luther observes with point : God who was the author of marriage was also the first who led in a bride. Adam recognized her not merely as a fellow-being and helpmeet for him, but as flesh of his flesh, as a creature intimately related to him in every part of his nature, by the identity of her own, and consequently connected with him by unity of mind and heart. God had made her *out of* him and *for* him, and had brought her *to* him. C. G. B.——God himself made the espousals between them, and joined them together in marriage. And by creating and joining together but one man and one woman in the beginning, intended that mankind should be so propagated, and not by polygamy. *Patrick.*

The marriage relation instituted by God in the state of innocence through the creation of the woman, the second human being, represented to Adam several important truths. It indicated to him, in the first place, that this was the most intimate relation possible among mankind ; that it constituted a unity, in fact, to which there was no parallel in creation. Secondly, the medium whereby man's wants, as recognized by the creator himself, should be supplied, and that defect in creation described as " not good for him" remedied, and the noblest of God's creatures raised to the sphere to which he was designed, so that they might be no obstacle to the Divine approval pronouncing the entire work " very good." This point was more fully brought out in the promises which succeeded the fall, and the bearing of which, in this respect, was recognized by Adam when " he called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." At the same time he was conscious of his own divinely determined and declared superiority, not only as the head of creation in general, but also of the woman (1 Cor. 11 : 3). This appears from the fact that he bestowed upon her a name as he had previously on the inferior creatures around him. D. M.

Marriage is honorable, but this surely was the most honorable marriage that ever was, in which God himself had all along an immediate hand. Marriages (they say) are made in heaven : we

are sure this was ; for the man, the woman, the match, were all God's own work : he, by his power, made them *both*, and now, by his ordinance, made them *one*. This was a marriage made in perfect innocency, and so was never any marriage since. H.——Marriage is a word and an institution which sin has so far associated with low instinct, with ideas of barter, convenience, and advantage, that some effort of the imagination is requisite to conceive of its heavenly original, its paradisiacal prototype, which secured to man the exercise of his most joyful sympathies, society so blessed, confidence so complete, that between the two whom God had placed in Eden there was but one heart. W. A.

Christianity has exalted marriage to the highest dignity, and crowned it with the most sacred beauty : it is the symbol of the union of Christ and his Church ; and the consummation of hope, purity, and joy in heaven is typified under "the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Marriage is the festival of love, and as such should be attended with all that represents beauty and felicity : it is the festival of joy ; and as such should be a time of pre-eminent joyousness to all who assist in its solemnities. But it is also a festival of consecration ; and it should be hallowed with the word of God and prayer. J. P. T.

**24. Leave father and mother.** These are the words of Moses, and also of God ; but not Adam's. They would be more correctly expressed,—"Therefore may a man leave his father and mother, but he shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh." There will be times and circumstances when a man is permitted, nay, is commanded, to leave his father and mother ; but his wife is he never permitted to leave—they both shall be one. This is not said of the woman, because she already by her marriage has left father and mother. *Gerl.*——According to this passage, *marriage*, that primitive form of human society from which all other forms of society arise, and for which man gives up the others, did not spring from the blind sway of natural impulse, but from *divine institution*. Its original form is monogamy ; and the fact that the bond of matrimony is represented as stronger than that moral relation between parents and children, which is placed so high in the Old Testament, indicates that it forms not simply a bodily union, but also a *spiritual* oneness. O.——The foundation of this new constitution was laid in the divinely instituted union of husband and wife. "Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning made them *a* male and *a* female (as intending to prevent both polygamy and divorce), and said (as the formal authentification of the great law of marriage already inserted in the constitution of human nature), for this cause (or, on account of entering into the married state) shall a man leave his father and mother (the nearest relation he had previously sustained), and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh ; wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." A union this so intimate, that every other is to yield to it ; so sacred, that the Divine Proclamation concerning it is, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder ;" so indissoluble, that nothing is to separate it but that which separates the soul from the body ; so spiritual in its ultimate relation and aims, as to find its antitype only in that divine union which, as the fruit of redemption, is to survive every other, and to obtain its consummation in heaven. The will of God was clearly indicated respecting the number to be united in marriage, by the creation, at first, of one man and one woman. But the continued balance of the number of the sexes, age after age, notwithstanding their perpetual increase, was an ever-increasing confirmation of the same law. As time advanced, too, the evils resulting from polygamy would furnish still further and stronger corroboration of the law. J. H.——By the terms of the command, a man shall cleave to his *wife* (not wives) *only*. *Bush.*

Two facts of perpetual significance were established by the creation of Woman,—the fact of *sex*, and the fact of the *interdependence of the sexes*. The Creator chose to create Woman as the medium for the increase of the race ; and thus the disinction of Sex is permanently established in the race itself. And with this distinction comes in the condition and the feeling of interdependence,—neither sex complete without the other, neither able to dispense with the other. J. P. T.——Neither sex alone is the standard of human nature. Each is to receive an impress from the distinctive excellences of the other, and to impart the spirit of its own. Each is to the other the image of distinct aspects of the Divine character ; and, by being disentangled and drawn out from the inner circle of self, and made to find excellence and happiness in the love of the other, they are trained to look away together for their highest good to a union with that Objective Excellence, of which their own union is the sacred type and the mysterious pledge. J. H.

The equality of the sexes is not *sameness* of endowments and adaptations, but *equality* with

*differentia.* The attributes of sex belong to the soul as well as to the body, so that in their intellectual and spiritual natures, much as they possess in common, the Man and the Woman are also the complement each of the other; and in the distribution of these complementary qualities Woman certainly has no cause to envy her partner. Her delicate and beautiful presence, her graces and charms of person and manner, her intuitive affinities for the true, the pure, and the good, her divine faculty of counsel, her all-pervading, all controlling influence —these are *prerogatives* which Woman has no right to vacate by reducing herself to a mere tool of productive industry, a numerical factor of political economy. The delicate laws of her physical organization, the more subtle and beautiful laws of her social and moral influence alike forbid this uncrowning of her Womanhood. J. P. T.——The account of the creation of the first pair impresses this thought, that as regards authority, rule, public duties, the position of the woman is secondary. Constituted as she is, delicate, susceptible, shrinking from rude contact and strife,—she is unfit for leadership and public station. But by her perceptions and moral insight, her sympathies and affections, she is marvellously fitted to influence, to mould, to guide. *Cady.*

True human love makes the outgoings of two lives one. The one side for the other has no need for self-forgetfulness; every movement of the heart in either is taken up and shared by the other, and even an involuntary anticipation of the wishes of the one turns also the other in the same direction. No pleasure is separately enjoyed, no pain separately experienced; equal delight and equal endeavor occupy both minds. Conscious of solely belonging to each other, husband and wife will so worthily endure even the days of adversity that, when those days shall have passed, they will rejoice in having lived to see them. *Schleiermacher.*——Human love is only worthy of itself when it has realized its ideal, the true harmony of souls. When it fulfils its true mission, when it is manifested as the very flower of a nature in which the moral was meant to predominate, it tends to blend in one, not simply two organisms, but two individuals, who know how to combine respect with tenderness. Love does not abandon itself to the mere play of the sensations; it gives itself freely, and forever, to be the sharer, not only of joy, but of sorrow; hence it is not consumed by its own flame. Since it was not born of sensation, it lives on, when the senses are dulled; and it has indeed a deathless life. *De Pressensé.*——Christian love in marriage is exemplified only when by mutual endeavor both sides are quickened increasingly in spirit; when every hindrance to spiritual influence in the nature of the one is more and more restrained and diminished by the agency of the other; when their mutual love is hallowed by their common higher love to the Saviour; when this love is confirmed and proved by experience, and both advance toward the common goal of sanctification, then we have an illustration of the heavenly side of Christian marriage. *Schleiermacher.*

Love can be kept forever beautiful and blessed as at the first, by giving it constant utterance in word and act. The more it is allowed to flow out in delicate attentions and noble service, the stronger and more satisfying and more blessed it will be. The house becomes home only when love drops its heavenly manna in it fresh every day, and the true marriage vow is made not for once at the altar, but by loving words and helpful service and delicate attentions to the end. *Aikman.*

**25. Were not ashamed.** Shame implies a sense of guilt, which they had not, and an exposedness to the searching eye of a condemning judge, from which they were equally free. With the sentence terminates all we know of primeval innocence. May we surmise from it that the first pair spent at least the Sabbath, if not some days, or weeks, or years, in a state of integrity? M.——An evidence of the purity and innocency of that state wherein our first parents were created. They needed no clothes for defence against cold or heat, for neither could be injurious to them; they needed none for ornament; nay, they needed none for decency, they had no reason to be ashamed. *They knew not what shame was*, so the Chaldee reads it. Blushing is now the color of virtue, but it was not then the color of innocency. They that had no sin in their conscience, might well have no shame in their faces, though they had no clothes to their backs. H.——Clothes are the ensigns of our sin and covers of our shame. To be proud of them is as great a folly as for a beggar to be proud of his rags or a thief of his halter. As the prisoner looking on his irons thinketh on his theft, so we looking on our garments, should think on our sins. *Trapp.*

### *Unity of the Race.*

The human race is essentially one. The microscopic expert is summoned to examine the blood stain, not to determine whether it comes from African or Caucasian veins, which he can-

not tell, but whether it be the blood of man ; for Paul's word is true, not figuratively only, but literally, that God "hath made of *one blood* all nations of men." Eve is so called because she is the "mother of all living." Eve sprang from the side of Adam, but he sprang from no living form. The race is isolated from the lower groups by the inflow of the breath of God, by permanently upright form and articulate speech and by subjection to a moral economy ; and thus it stands apart, one and superior. *J. B. Thomas.*

In one respect there is a striking difference between the account of the human and that of the vegetable and animal creations. The two latter are spoken of generically as races, without the least reference to any individual progenitor or progenitors. But it is distinctly said that God made, not *men*, not a *race* or races, but two individuals. He made them "*in his own image*," and this remarkable expression, whatever be its depth of meaning, makes an ineffaceable distinction between the human and all lower species upon the earth. From the word *Adam* alone, we could not have determined with certainty that the account was not generic. But the particulars which are given respecting the female, her origin and established relation to the man, stamp upon the narrative a character of individuality which is unmistakable. The entire departure here from the language used in respect to other races puts the meaning beyond all doubt. If any fact in creation is clearly revealed, if there is any one placed beyond all cavil, beyond all room for any honest difference of interpretation, it is that the origin of the present human race was from one single pair. T. L.

In bodily structure, in language, in tradition, and in intellectual, moral, and religious character, we find abundant evidence to prove unity of race ; and there is the amplest confirmation of it in the character and extent of the Gospel or Christian scheme. It assumes unity, and it comes with a free, full, universal message. The Great Teacher and Redeemer drew no distinction : "Go ye therefore, and teach ALL nations." *W. Fraser.*——All races have the same anatomical structure ; the same physical organs ; and what is far more, the same intellectual and moral nature. Everywhere they exhibit the common effects of the fall of Adam ; the same depravity of moral nature ; the same common need of redemption by Christ. These are cardinal traits and tests. The Scriptures imply with the strongest form of implication that the Adam of Genesis is the father—the one only father—of the whole human race. The narrative of the creation ; of the fall ; and of the first promise of redemption—all imply this. Paul implies it in those passages in which he compares the ruin of the race through the one man Adam with the salvation provided for the race through the greater second *Man*, Jesus Christ. The strong passages are Rom. 5 : 12–19 and 1 Cor. 15 : 21, 22. H. C.

And as in Adam all die, so Christ is the spiritual head of all saved from the sin and death, no matter of what race. The universal Headship of the one finds proper and only counterpart in the universal Headship of the other. The salvation of Christ was parallel with the depravity of Adam. If any portion of the race is cut off from its relation to Adam, then also are they from any relation to Christ. If we close against any nation or tribe the pathway that leads them back to Eden and Adam, we close at the same time the pathway that leads to Calvary and Jesus and the cross. S. R.

*Admitted by Science.* We are now assuredly allowed by Mr. Darwin and his disciples to maintain that the unity of the human race, proclaimed by Genesis, is no longer open to any insuperable scientific objection. *Godet.*——On this point of the unity of man's origin, those who bow to the authority of the most ancient and the most venerable traditions, and those who accept the most imposing and popular of modern scientific theories, are found standing on common ground, and accepting the same result. *Argyll.*——I cannot see any good ground whatever, or even any tenable sort of evidence, for believing that there is more than one species of man. *Huxley.*——As far as I know, there has been no nation upon the earth, which, if it possessed any traditions on the origin of mankind, did not derive the human race from one pair, if not from one person. *Max Müller.*

Professor Cabell closes an exhaustive examination of the whole subject with the words : "The unity of the human race must be considered a fundamental and an accepted truth. Every department of knowledge has been searched for evidence, and all respond with an uniform testimony. The physical structure, constitution, and habits of the race—the mode in which it is produced, in which it exists, in which it perishes—everything that touches its mere animal existence, demonstrates the absolute certainty of its unity, so that no other generalization of *physiology* is more clear and more sure. Rising one step, to the highest manifestation of man's physical organization—his use of language and the power of connected speech

—the most profound survey of this most complex and tedious part of knowledge conducts the inquirer to no conclusion more indubitable than that there is a common origin, a common organization, a common nature, underlying and running through this endless variety of a common power, peculiar to the race, and to it alone. Thus a second science—philology—has borne its marvellous testimony. Rising one more step, and passing more completely to a higher region, we find the rational and moral nature of men of every age and kindred absolutely the same. Those great faculties by which man alone—and yet by which every man—perceives that there is in things that distinction which we call true and false, and that other distinction which we call good and evil, upon which distinctions and which faculties rests at last the moral and intellectual destiny of the entire race, belonging to us as men, without which we are not men, with which we are the head of the visible creation of God. So has a *third science* delivered its testimony. If we rise another step, and survey man as he is gathered into families and tribes and nations, with an endless variety of development, we still behold the broad foundations of a common nature reposing under all—the grand principles of a common being ruling in the midst of all. So a fourth, and the youngest of the sciences, *ethnology*, brings her tribute. And now from this lofty summit survey the whole track of ages. In their length and in their breadth scrutinize the recorded annals of mankind. There is not one page on which one fact is written which favors the historical idea of a diversity of nature or origin, while the whole scope of human story involves, assumes, and proclaims, as the first and grandest historic truth, the absolute unity of the race." ("Unity of Mankind," pp. 285.) G. D. A.

## Section 21.

THE FAMILY. SUBDUING OF THE EARTH, AND DOMINION OVER THE CREATURES. END OF SIXTH DAY.

GENESIS 1 : 28–31.

28 AND God blessed them : and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish
the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of
29 the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I
have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every
30 tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat : and to
every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon
31 the earth, wherein there is life, *I have given* every green herb for meat : and it was so. And
God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The command to the first pair to *be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth* was given as a blessing of paradise, and while man was unfallen. *Dabney.*——The record in Genesis stands, not only unmatched for beauty and dignity, but guaranteed by the testimony of all subsequent history, and commending itself to the profoundest philosophy. In the beginning God created man in his own image ; male and female created he them, preserving the unity in the diversity ; and having thus created them he blessed their wedlock, and gave them Eden for a home. The monogamous family is the primitive domestic institution. *Behrends.*

In every aspect, physical, economical, intellectual, moral, *the Family* is the appointed nursery of the race for the well-being of the individual and the progress of society. Neatness, politeness, industry, economy, order, punctuality, affectionateness, truth, where can these be acquired from tutors or from books, as they are instilled with the dews of daily affection in the household and warmed with the sunshine of its love? As one has said, "Home education is a law of Nature. And where can that labor of love be found more minutely and wisely divided than between the father and the mother, between patience and power, tenderness and authority, the instinctive love of offspring, and the moral regard for the excellence and well-

being of that offspring?" Hence it is that the Family, as originally constituted in Paradise, is the only true basis of society. J. P. T.

In the Family the great principles are unfolded upon which all human government rests, and society itself is created in the germ. It is simply the law of the household that expands itself through all the ramifications of the commonwealth; and a true statesmanship must glean its great and essential principles from the subordination first established in the Family. The nearer a government is conformed to this ideal, in the distribution of power and in the combination of influences by which society shall be controlled, the more perfect will it be, both in its conception and administration. *Palmer.*——There can be no state where there are no citizens, and there can be no citizens where there is no family. The existence of the state is dependent on that relation of the sexes on which marriage is based. Not the individual therefore, but the family, is the unit of society; and so far from its being true that the state may determine the constitution of the family, the order of nature demands that the state shall conform in its legislation to the antecedent law of the household. The latter is an elemental fact in the social organization, and the statute must deal with it as fundamental and ultimate. *Behrends.*

In the Family, Man is trained to reverence for just and lawful authority; submission to government; obedience to law. In the Family, one learns to control instinct and passion by reason and affection. In the Family, one learns to respect the rights and the feelings of others as equal to his own. The child in the nursery is taught the rights of property, and the claims of gratitude and love. The Family is the proper nursery of the race in morality and religion. For this it was designed by the Creator. Here are inculcated those principles of moral government; here are developed those pure and generous affections; here are nurtured those immortal hopes, that fit the growing mind to recognize and assume relations toward that heavenly Father of whose authority and benignity the earthly father is its daily type. The Family was instituted as a school for heaven, whose perfect symbol is the Family gathered in their father's house. J. P. T.

The Family is an ordinance of God. It draws its credentials from the parental appointment in Eden. Its solemn ceremony of installation was the crowning act of creation. No other institution, whether surviving now or perished in the past, can show such an antiquity. The records of it are the first syllables of written history, and the faintest stammerings of tradition. It runs up, beyond Assyrian or Chaldean empires, and the founding of Palmyra, to the tents on the plains of Shinar. The first breathing of its spirit was the simplicity of patriarchs. It began while the earliest beams of the world's twilight were shooting up into a sky whose stars no tongue had yet called by their names,—over an unpeopled world. Was not its origin, then, divine? And is not the preservation of the family as clearly stamped with God's purpose as its origin? Its uses,—with equal distinctness, with what bright tokens, with what emphatic demonstrations, do they speak of the home as God's appointment! Where lie the clearest proofs of a heavenly watchfulness over our heads, if not in the shelters where we lay those heads at night? Consider what securities home affections bind about tempted virtue; how the man of business carries a zone of moral purity woven about him by the caresses of children, from his house to the market-place; how the false or fraudulent purpose, half conceived in the counting-room, is rebuked and put to shame by the innocence that gazes into his eyes and clings about his neck when he goes home and shuts the door on the world at night. Consider what a hindrance household love interposes, to stay the straying feet of dissipation; what a triple shield it holds up against the sins of prodigality, indulgence, or dishonor! Consider that, with most of us, whatever impulses of generosity visit the soul, whatever prayers we breathe, whatever holy vows of religious consecration we pledge, whatever aspiring resolves we form, are apt to spring up within the sacred enclosures of the house! Consider how the mere memory of that spot, with all its precious endearments, goes forth with the traveller, sails with the sailor, keeps vigils over the exposed heart among the perils of the foreign city, sweetens the feverish dreams and softens the pain of the sufferer in the sickly climate, and, by calling his love homeward, calls his faith to Heaven! Consider that the discipline of disease, the purification of bereavement, the tears of mourners, are all elements in the sanctity of home; that closets of devotion are parts of the architecture of the house; that Bibles are opened on its tables; that the eyes of newborn children open, and their first breaths are drawn, in its chambers; and that the dead body is borne out of its doors;—how fast do the gathering proofs accumulate, that the human dwelling is a sanctuary of the Most High! Whoever builds its walls, God hallows them for

his temple. That outward house is but the visible pattern of the interior edifice ; and of that spiritual structure God has laid the foundation, and sprung the arches, and commanded the economy. The family is surely his ordinance. F. D. H.

It may be beyond our skill to distinguish and allot the several parts of the agency which belong to God and to the human instruments in the origin of a new human soul. It is enough for us to know that God, by His mysterious works of creation and providence, does empower human parents for this amazing result—the origination, out of nothing, of a new being—and that, a rational, immortal spirit! How solemn, how high, this prerogative! It raises man nearer the almighty Creator, in his supreme prerogative as Master of all things, than anything else that is done by creatures on earth or in heaven. Angels are not thus endued *Dabney.*——Why can man have been invested subordinately with the prerogative of multiplying his own image, but in order that he might transform his offspring into the likeness of the Creator? For this profound conception of the conjugal union, we are indebted exclusively to the Bible. The derivation of the woman, and of only one woman, from the man—the domestic supremacy of the man—the entireness or oneness of the union—and its sacred indissolubility—all point to this high spiritual aim as the normal idea of marriage. Only on this ground have two beings, made for God, any right to give themselves up to each other in a union of love. But the fact that the union is one by which the Creator actually admits man into fellowship with Himself in the accomplishment of His highest ends, makes the mutual surrender, otherwise inexplicable, consistent with human dignity by consecrating it to the divine glory. In the primal union, all the foreshadowings of nature on the subject were interpreted and fulfilled. That which, in the lower creation, had been only sexual and transitory, now became sacramentally related to the spiritual and eternal. The paternal will found itself enthroned over other wills. Man was the representative of God. The family became the seat of moral government—the very image of the divine. To individual man, the first table of the law only would have been known ; with the family, came the second table. Aspects of the divine character, hitherto unknown, were now unveiled ; and the family constitution, rightly understood, became a new volume of divine Revelation. J. H.

In the Pauline ideal the headship of the husband is regarded as the enactment of a wise beneficence, securing the orderly unity of the household : it is symboled by the headship of Christ in the church, and by the rule which every man is called upon to exercise over his own body. The relation of husband and wife is not regarded as that of a king to his subjects, or of a master to his slaves, or of a man to his property ; but as grounded in love, limited by the law of Christ, and as determined by a balancing of claims as intricate and subtle as that by which body and soul act and react upon each other. Under such ethical limitations the headship of the husband is affirmed, not for the aggrandizement of the man, but as indispensable to the establishment and maintenance of the unity of the family. *Behrends.*

As *moral* and *accountable* beings the husband and wife, by respecting the decisions of each other's conscience, are to strengthen its authority. By the exercise of forbearance, where forbearance is necessary ; by the mutual admiration of everything estimable ; and by prayer for each other's highest welfare, they are constantly to improve each other's character, to convert marriage into a discipline of virtue, and thus to be ever finding in each other new cause for affection, and for gratitude to Him who has given them to each other. Although perfection, in the highest sense, is unattainable, they are, in this way, to be ever advancing toward it. And for this they are responsible, increasingly responsible. Obligation accumulates with opportunity. And at every onward stage of their course—say, at the return of every anniversary of their union—they are held responsible for all the excellence and consequent happiness which they might have possessed on that day, had they discharged their respective duties toward each other during every hour of every preceding day. J H.

The household must be built on the Divine pattern. It must be founded on, and cemented by, love ; and the pledge of love is inviolable fidelity. No calamities must be permitted to break its strength. Sickness and old age must not dim its beauty, nor lessen its tenderness. It must deepen with the years, more and more refined in quality and force, outgrowing and casting aside its early and earthly wrappings, until death transfigures it into a holy memory and an abiding heritage. *Behrends.*

Parental, and especially maternal, affection is the most disinterested principle which remains in the ruined nature of man. God has kept alive this remnant of the estate of paradise, like the one entirely fresh oasis in the desert of de-

pravity. He preserves it, apparently, that there may be a spot whence can flow forth the water of life for dying humanity. It is the only adequate type, on earth, of Divine love. God honors it by making it the imperfect image from which He would have us comprehend His own infinite benevolence and pity. He declares, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." When He would exalt the love of redemption to its most transcendent height, He can find nothing on earth which comes so near it as a mother's love, although this also comes short of it. *Dabney.*

All the Religion there is in the world has come through the Family. The Abrahamic covenant rests upon it. Patriarchal piety was kept alive on its altars. Household consecration is the leading feature of primitive and gospel godliness. Parents and children and home-piety are the chief factors in all revivals, in all reformations, and the work of conversion and sanctification goes on mainly along the line of a godly seed, and household consecration, and family purity and power. Hence the decay of Family Religion is the greatest and most alarming evil that can come upon society. You may destroy the State and the Church, and rebuild them both by means of the Family, as God ordained it. *Sherwood.*

To him who has appreciated the parental relation as God represents it, the failure to include it within the circuit of the visible church, to sanctify its obligations and to seal its hopes with the sacramental badge, would appear an unaccountable thing. We know that the promise of a multiplying offspring was the blessing of paradise; that paternity was the splendid expedient of our Maker for multiplying the human subjects of His blessings and instruments of His glory, and of making holiness and bliss the sure, hereditary possession of the increasing multitudes of men, through the probation and adoption of their first father. We hear Him declare in Malachi 2 : 15, long after the Fall, that His object in founding the family, in the form of monogamy, was "to seek a godly seed." Thus the supreme end of the family institution is as distinctly religious and spiritual as that of the church itself. The instrumentalities of the family are chosen and ordained of God as the most efficient of all means of grace. To family piety are given the best promises of the Gospel, under the new as well as under the old dispensation. How, then, should a wise God do otherwise than consecrate the Christian family, and ordain that the believing parents shall sanctify the children? Hence, the very foundation of all parental fidelity to children's souls is to be laid in the conscientious, solemn and hearty adoption of the very duties and promises which God seals in the covenant of infant baptism. It is pleasing to think that many Christians who refuse the sacrament do, with a happy inconsistency, embrace the duties and seek the blessing. But God gives all His people the truths and promises, along with the edifying seal Let us hold fast to both. *Dabney.*

**28. And subdue it.** At the present day man has wandered to the ends of the earth. Yet vast realms lie unexplored, waiting his arrival. This clause may be described as *the colonist's charter.* The commission thus received was to utilize for his necessities the vast resources of the earth, by agricultural and mining operations, by geographical research, scientific discovery and mechanical invention. *Whitelaw.*

——The subduing and ruling refer not to the mere supply of his natural wants, for which provision is made in the following verse, but to the accomplishment of his various purposes of science and beneficence, whether toward the inferior animals or his own race. It is the part of intellectual and moral reason to employ power for the ends of general no less than personal good. The sway of man ought to be beneficent. M.

What an education for the race has been this labor of *subduing the earth!* How it has developed reflection, stimulated invention, and quickened the powers of combination, which would otherwise have lain dormant! Nor are the collateral and remote less important than the direct and immediate results. He who takes a piece of timber from the common forest, and forms it into a useful implement, thereby makes it his own, and it cannot rightfully be taken from him; since no one can justly appropriate to himself the product of another's skill and labor. So he who originally takes possession of an unappropriated field, and by his labor prepares it for use, thereby makes it his own, and it cannot rightfully be taken from him. Hence arises the right of property, the origin and bond of civil society; and thus all the blessings of society, and of civilization and government, are due to the divinely implanted impulse, "fill the earth, *and subdue it.*" T. J. C.

**Have dominion over every living thing.** Man is expressly set apart as ruler of all creation, of its varied forces and creatures. He is the last and the most perfect being formed from that earth to which himself belongs, and whose every stage of life he includes in himself.

Hence he is also qualified to be its representative, both so far as he is personally concerned, and in relation to every higher sphere of existence. But as the image of God, he is also of *Divine* origin, and hence above nature, and the representative of God to it, its lord and master. K.——The lion has his tooth, the crocodile his coat of mail, the birds their wings, the fish their fins ; but which is man's weapon for attack, which his shield for defense?—the *spirit from God:* therefore all must obey him. The cattle on the pasture, wild beasts roaming the forests, birds flying below the expanse of heaven, fish swimming in the depths of the sea ; they all must obey him—man is their lord and king. *Tholuck.*

**29, 30.** Provision for the sustenance of man (v. 29), and of other animals (v. 30).

To man is assigned *every herb scattering seed* (propagated by seed), leaving him his choice among them of such as are suited to his nature and wants, as the different kinds of grain, pulse, etc. ; and every fruit-tree in like manner, to choose among them what is suited to his taste, and adapted for his nourishment. To other animals is assigned *all green herbage*, without distinction. T. J. C.——From this original commission to Adam, afterward renewed and enlarged in the announcement to Noah, the second representative of the race, it appears that every right and privilege of man on the earth have their basis in an *express Divine charter.* B.

Man stood, at his creation, a subject as toward his Creator, but a sovereign as toward the other creatures of the earthly system. He stands forth in the image of God. His vital principle is inseparably united with his soul. He is capable of an endless life himself, with the power of transmitting the power of a like endless existence to an innumerable race of beings in his own image and likeness. He is capable of communion with God and with the angelic orders of being. He is free from every sort of evil, physical, mental, moral or spiritual. Out of such a state of facts arises necessarily certain relations to God the Creator and to other creatures. To God as the author of his being he owes perfect obedience and service. To God as the bestower of so many blessings he owes in return a grateful love and self-consecration. To the creatures of his dominion he owes a just and benevolent administration of his authority and rule. To the beings who may spring from him he owes a parental care and loving guardianship, that they may keep steadfastly their "first estate" of bliss and not fall irrevocably by sinning against God. S. R.

**31. Everything good.** That a divine *plan* is to be realized in the world, and that the divine creation is therefore a teleological act, is shown in the *account of the creation*, partly and in general in the progress of creation according to a definite plan, and partly in particular in the divine sanction, "and God saw that it was good," following each step of creation, and in the divine blessing pronounced on every living being. But the creating God does not reach the goal of His creation until He has set over against Him His image in man. From this fact it is plain that the *self revelation* of God is the final end of the creation of the world ; or, to express it more generally, that the whole world serves to reveal the divine *glory*, and is thereby the object of divine joy (Ps. 104 : 31). The Old Testament view of nature rests on this fundamental conception. O.——Unity of purpose pervades all the works of the Almighty. The scheme of his government is one ; and though there be wheels within wheels, plans within plans, all move on in unbroken harmony and tend to a common result. There is a subordination of parts,—the inanimate to the living, the material to the spiritual, the spiritual to the moral, and all to the glory of God ; and when He casts the eye of His omniscience upon any portion of His works, He delights not in it as an isolated fragment, however perfect in its kind or however clearly displaying any single perfection of His nature, but as a means tending, in its proper place, to the development of the great result which the whole was designed to accomplish. *Thornwell.*

**The sixth day.** The amount of creative and other work brought within the sixth day should be noticed. First, God created all the land animals ; then Adam ; then he brought "every beast of the field and every fowl of the air" to Adam to see what he would call them—which at least must assume that Adam had attained a somewhat full knowledge of language, and that he had time enough to study the special character of each animal so as to give each one its appropriate name, and time enough also to ascertain that there was not one among them all adapted to be a "helpmeet" for himself. Then the "deep sleep" of Adam—how long protracted, the record saith not ; and finally the creation of Eve, all come within the sixth day. It is not easy to see how Moses or his intelligent readers of the early time could have supposed all this to have transpired within the twelve hours of light in a human day. We may say, moreover, in regard to each and all of these six creative periods that if the holy angels were in-

deed spectators of these scenes, and if God adjusted his methods of creation to the capacities of these pupils--these admiring students of his glorious works--then surely we must not think of his compressing them within the period of six human days. Divine days they certainly must have been, sufficiently protracted to afford finite minds scope for intelligent study, adoring contemplation, and as the Bible indicates, most rapturous shouts of joy. H. C.

## Section 22.

### SEVENTH DAY. SUMMARY OF CREATION.

GENESIS 2 : 1-6.

1 AND the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh
2 day God finished his work which he had made ; and he rested on the seventh day from all his
3 work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it : because that
in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.
4 These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day
5 that the LORD God made earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth,
and no herb of the field had yet sprung up : for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon
6 the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground ; but there went up a mist from the
earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

**2. God finished his work.** The rest of the seventh day puts an end to the *creative* activity, properly so called. The Sabbath, which puts an end to the Divine work in Nature, gives a solemn confirmation to the truth already set forth in the repeated words, "*and God said*,"—the truth that the earth is the work of an intelligent and self governing Being, who does all things by measure, who sets before Himself, while working, a definite object to be attained, and who, as soon as that object is attained, sets at rest again those productive forces which He had put in motion. *Godet.*——Since the beginning of this day no new creation has taken place. God rests as the Creator of the visible universe. The forces of nature are in that admirable equilibrium which we now behold, and which is necessary to our existence. No more mountains or continents are formed, no new species of plants or animals are created. Nature goes on steadily in its wonted path. All movement, all progress has passed into the realm of mankind, which is now accomplishing its task. The morning of the seventh is not followed by any *evening*. The day is still open. When the evening shall come the last hour of humanity will strike. *Guyot.*

"Now begins the seventh day, the day of rest, or the sabbath of the earth"—the day now in progress which has not yet reached its evening, in which God's "work is one of love to man, the redemption;" the creation of "the new man, born anew of the Spirit, in the heart of the natural man." Parallel with the week of Creation, man, a being of a few short years, has his week ; and, by God's appointment, as well as Nature's need, his seventh day of rest—"of rest from daily toil, but of activity in the higher world of the spirit." *Dana.*——God's work of elevating, raising, of making the high in due progression succeed the low, still goes on. But that work is now the fitting and preparing imperfect man for a perfect future state. God's seventh day's work is the work of Redemption. Read in this light his reason vouchsafed to man for the institution of the Sabbath is found to yield a meaning of peculiar breadth and emphasis. It seems to say, God rests on *his* Sabbath from his creative labors, in order that by his Sabbath day's work he may save and elevate you ; rest ye also on your Sabbaths, that through your co-operation with him in this great work ye may be elevated and saved. *Hugh Miller.*

*Providence is creation continued.* The government of the world is as much of God as the giving of it a being. Creation was a work that ended in six days, but providence is a work that never ends ; thus God always worketh, though always at rest. *Caryl.*——From the first moment of creation unto this hour God has continued His supervision of the works of His hand. He has put forth no creative energy since He brought man into being ; but at the

end of the world, in the changes that shall produce a new heaven and a new earth, God will resume that creative activity which is now in suspense. Until then He rests. J. P. T.——When the last man has been born and has arrived at the crisis of his destiny, then may we expect a *new creation*, another putting forth of the divine energy, to prepare the skies above and the earth beneath for a new stage of man's history, in which he will appear as a race no longer in process of development, but completed in number, confirmed in moral character, transformed in physical constitution, and so adapted for a new scene of existence. Meanwhile, the interval between the creation now recorded and that prognosticated in subsequent revelations from heaven (Is. 65 : 17 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 13 ; Rev. 21 : 1) is the long Sabbath of the Almighty, so far as this world is concerned. M.

**He rested.** In these chapters of creation, God is said to hover, to speak, to see and examine, to give names, to approve of his works, to deliberate with himself, to rest, and to repose himself. By these phrases the biblical text loses nothing of its grandeur, and gains immeasurably in distinctness and perspicuity ; it describes Divine manifestation for human beings and in a human medium. *Kal.*——The Holy Scripture knows nothing of a God who in eternal, immovable unchangeableness views all things, past, present, and future, just in the same way, but One who after creating the world, with man its king, partakes by means of His love in the joy and pain of His creation, yet without diminution of His eternal blessedness. *Gerl.*

**On the seventh day.** The seventh day is distinguished from all the preceding days by being itself the subject of the narrative. In the absence of any work on this day, the Eternal is occupied with the day itself, and does four things in reference to it. *First*, he ceased from his work which he had made. *Secondly*, he rested. By this was indicated that his undertaking was accomplished. *Thirdly*, he blessed the seventh day. Blessing results in the bestowment of some good on the object blessed. The only good that can be bestowed on a portion of time is to dedicate it to a noble use, a peculiar enjoyment. Accordingly, *in the fourth place*, he hallowed it or set it apart to a holy rest. M.——To "bless" a day was to set it apart to be a blessing ; but there was no sense in which God could make any one portion of duration more of a blessing to Himself than another, He being always self contained and infinite in his blessings. To "hallow" the day was to dedicate it to some sacred, moral, and beneficial use ; but of course God could not have made one period of time more holy than another to Himself. The sanctifying must have had reference to its use by and for others. This sacred day is God's day, which man should *devote* to Him in some special or uncommon way, turning aside from the common occupations of life to a separate peculiar observance of this portion of time. Hence this grand day of the Almighty, this on-going day, this day which, dating from the creation of Man as an intellectual creature, shall continue till the world and the present course of time shall close, is the type of the Sabbath, the Rest-day for the creatures of God. J. P. T.

God gave the Sabbath *his first ordinance* to man while he stood the father and representative of the whole human race : therefore the Sabbath is not for one nation, for one time, or for one place. It is the fair type of Heaven's eternal day– of the state of endless blessedness and glory, where human souls, having fully regained the divine image and become united to the *Centre* and Source of all perfection and excellence, shall *rest* in God unutterably happy through the immeasurable progress of duration. Of this consummation, every returning Sabbath should at once be a type, a remembrancer, and a foretaste to all who are taught of God. A. C. ——With the Sabbath begins the sacred history of man—the day on which he stood forth to bless God, and, in company with Eve, entered on his divine calling upon earth. The creation without the creation festival, the world's unrest without rest in God, is altogether vain and transitory. The sacred day appointed, blessed, consecrated by God, is that from which the blessing and sanctification of the world and time, of human life and human society, proceed. Nor is anything more needed than the recognition of its original appointment and sacred destination, for our receiving the full impression of its sanctity. How was it possible for the first man ever to forget it? From the very beginning was it written upon his heart, Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it. *Sartorius.*

The three elements of Sabbath blessing are, bodily and mental rest, family union and fellowship, and religious meditation and worship, including the highest moral culture and spiritual satisfaction. The rest is to be *for the body's sake*, and, therefore, must be such rest as is consistent with a good measure of sober bodily refreshment and enjoyment. The rest is *for the sake of family intercourse and union*, and must therefore be so defined and measured as to be

in consistency with the conditions of family union, and, in a right sense, of family festivity, including in the scope of the word *family*, servants as well as children. Above all, the rest is to be *for the sake of*, that which is the highest privilege and enjoyment of the day, *spiritual meditation and fellowship and Divine worship.* Man's spirit cannot be refreshed, exalted, sublimed, without worship. Without worship, man's *heart* cannot be *at rest.* Without faith and worship, man's *intellect* cannot be *satisfied.* And in proportion as man becomes more completely developed, as he grows into a more thoughtful moral being, with higher aspirations, and in fuller sympathy with the "powers of the world to come," must worship become more and more the necessity, the solace, the strength, the law, of his inmost being. Thus understanding the Sabbath law, all is brought into harmony; bodily and mental rest, family union and intercourse, Divine worship. The rest is in order to the family fellowship and the holy worship. The family fellowship is sanctified by worship; the family union is crowned by united worship in the "great congregation," and around the family altar. *Rigg.*

Two hallowed institutions have descended to us from the days of primeval innocence,—the wedding and the Sabbath. The former indicates communion of the purest and most perfect kind between equals of the same class. The latter implies communion of the highest and holiest kind between the Creator and the intelligent creature. The two combined import communion with each other in communion with God. Wedded union is the sum and type of every social tie. It gives rise and scope to all the nameless joys of home. It is the native field for the cultivation of all the social virtues. It provides for the due framing and checking of the overgrowth of interest in self, and for the gentle training and fostering of a growing interest in others. It unfolds the graces and charms of mutual love, and imparts to the susceptible heart all the peace and joy, all the light and fire, all the frankness and life of conscious and constant purity and good-will. Friendship, brotherly kindness, and love are still hopeful and sacred names among mankind. Sabbath-keeping lifts the wedded pair, the brethren, the friends, the one-minded, up to communion with God. The joy of achievement is a feeling common to God and man. The commemoration of the auspicious beginning of a holy and happy existence will live in man while memory lasts. The anticipation also of joyful repose after the end of a work well done will gild the future while hope survives. Thus the idea of the Sabbath spans the whole of man's existence. History and prophecy commingle in its peaceful meditations, and both are linked with God. God is: he is the Author of all being, and the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. This is the noble lesson of the Sabbath. M.

*Summaries: Facts and Proofs.*

The Sabbath is, by Divine law, a day of rest, in order that it may be a day of bodily and spiritual refreshment and of devout worship. The rest of the sacred day is needful for man as man—for his physical well-being, his intellectual health and energy, his family union and happiness, and his moral culture—and therefore ought by human law to be enforced, on the basis of its prescription for man's benefit by the Divine law. The rest of the Sabbath is also requisite, in order to a right and worthy use and enjoyment of the spiritual duties and privileges proper to the day, so that its meaning and blessing, as a day of worship, can only be truly brought out when it is a day of rest. Thus the Divine commandment to sanctify the Sabbath as a day of rest justifies itself on the ground of our human relations and necessities, proves itself to be the guardian of human rights; and, at the same time, in its care for what belongs to our humanity, merely as such, secures also the needful opportunity, while it exhibits the proper motives, for the highest, that is the truly religious and Christian, enjoyment of the day. Thus rest and worship, humanity and religion, man's rights and God's rights, are indissolubly joined together; and provision is made for guarding and honoring all these at once in the observance of that law of the Decalogue which stands as the link between the first and the second tables. *Rigg.*

The law of the Sabbath is fundamental, imperative, and perpetual, like the marriage relation—the two great unchanged and unchangeable institutions saved to man from the ruin of Paradise. The necessity of the Sabbath continues parallel with the necessity of the family. The one can no more be abrogated without involving the moral disorder, degeneracy, and degradation of society, than the other. The Sabbath was made *for* man in the same high sense that the family was made for man. It is a colossal institution, wide as humanity, perpetual as time, and deeply rooted in the constitution of man's nature. *Peck.*——The other signal institution of primeval man was that one which lies at the foundation of all outer worship of God and all organized beneficence tow-

ard man, the bulwark of society, the supplement of the home, the universal refiner and civilizer, the guaranty of social order and friendly relationship, the institution whereby all other human institutions are preserved and made effective—the seventh sacred day. It clearly is recorded as a *part of the preparation of the world for man.* Man's whole nature, physical, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual, has been proved over and over to coincide with the Saviour's declaration, "the Sabbath was made for man." S. C. B.

We are not poorer, but richer, because we have, through many ages, rested from our labors one day in seven. That day is not lost. While industry is suspended, while the plough lies in the furrow, while no smoke ascends from the factory, a process is going on quite as important to the wealth of nations as any process which is performed on more busy days. Man, the machine of machines, is repairing and winding up, so that he returns to his labors on the Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirits, with renewed corporeal vigor. *Macaulay.*

As really, if not as obviously, do mankind need the Sabbath rest, as that of night. Its physical benefits, which candid men universally admit, are best secured when it is most sacredly kept in accordance with its higher ends. As piety is conducive to morality, so is the spiritual Sabbath to the physical. The better we become acquainted with human nature, the more significant are the words, "the Sabbath was made for man." We can accept the declaration in Genesis as meaning no less than that a weekly day of hallowed rest enters into the plan of creation. Incorporated into the creation-narrative, and exhibiting the divine example, it indicates to man the divine will—the lesson that, in the natural and moral economy which the Creator has established, there is a necessity created, and a provision made, for a Sabbath. *Smythe.*——The ground of obligation lay in the divine act ; the rule of duty was exhibited in the divine example ; for these were disclosed to men from the first for the express purpose of leading them to know and do what is agreeable to the will of God. If such means were not sufficient to speak with clearness and authority to men's consciences, then it may be affirmed that the first race of mankind were free from all authoritative direction and control whatever. We hold by the truthfulness and natural import of the divine record. And doing this, we are shut up to the conclusion that it was at first designed and appointed by God that mankind should sanctify every returning seventh day, as a season of comparative rest from worldly labor, of spiritual contemplation and religious employment, that so they might cease from their own works and enter into the rest of God. P. F. ——That the observance of a Sabbath is thus founded in reasons permanent and general, may be properly inferred from two further considerations. It was written by the finger of God upon one of those tables of stone all whose other contents have this character of universality and perpetuity. Each of these commands constitutes one of the laws the Spirit of Christ is to write upon the heart. The circumstances accompanying the annunciation of the Fourth Commandment and the position assigned to it, approve it as occupying in the mind of the divine Legislator a place of lasting consequence and authority. And further, no theory of the Sabbath as a merely Jewish institution fairly embraces these words : "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy . . . *for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it.*" *Smyth.*

The points which the friends of the Sabbath accept and regard as established are the following : 1. That the Sabbath was given to our first parents in Eden, and that it was intended for the race. 2. That we find unmistakable indications of the Sabbath, both in the Scriptures and in heathen literature, between the original command and the giving of the Law. 3. That when the Law was given, the command to hallow the Sabbath was made conspicuous, as one of the ten commandments. It has the same rank as the other commandments, all of which are moral in their character and universally binding. 4. That during the subsequent history of the Jews the Sabbath is referred to by the prophets in a way to show that they classed it with the other commandments, and that they regarded its observance as intimately connected with the prosperity of the nation. 5. That at the time of our Saviour the Sabbath was observed with great strictness ; the people assembled regularly for public worship, and Moses and the prophets were read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. Also, this worship was attended by our Saviour, and while He reproved the superstitious observances and over-scrupulousness that had crept in, he yet recognized the Sabbath as a divine institution, and as "made for man." 6. That after the resurrection of Christ the day was changed, and the Christian Sabbath, with substantially the same ends, has been perpetuated till the present time.

The Sabbath authenticates itself as from God in various ways : 1. Regarding man as sinful, taking him as we now find him in every country where the Sabbath is unknown, the very conception of a *holy* Sabbath would have been impossible. There could have been nothing within him or without him to suggest it. 2. Regarding men as selfish, the rich and the powerful would never have originated an institution, or consented to it, which would not only free laborers and dependents and slaves from labor one seventh of the time, but would require that time for the service of another. 3. As the Sabbath corresponds with no cycle or natural division of time, it must have been impossible for any man, or number of men, to single out one day, and set it apart authoritatively. Man could neither have decided rightly the proportion of time to be set apart, nor have guarded the sanctity of the day by penalties. If the division of time into weeks were wholly unknown, it would be impossible that it should be introduced by man. 4. Man could not have so associated the Sabbath with the grandest ideas made known by revelation, or possible to thought, as the creation of the world, the resurrection of Christ, the outpouring of the Spirit, and the rest of a holy heaven. He could not have made it span the arch from the beginning till the consummation of all things. 5. The Sabbath authenticates its divine origin not only as it thus blends with the highest ideas and interests of man as connected with the past and the future, but by its analogy with the works of God as simple and at the same time touching the interests of the present life at so many points. In this it is like the air and the water, which seem so simple, yet subserve so many uses.

As thus impossible to have been originated by man, as connected with the creation of the world, with the resurrection of Christ, with the outpouring of the Spirit, and with the rest of heaven ; being analogous to nature, and promoting every interest of time, we say that the religious Sabbath comes to man bearing its own credentials as from God. M. H.

**4-6.** A condensed description, including the three main stages of the six days' creation. "When no plant was yet in the earth" refers to the first and second and dawn of the third day. "No herb yet grown" to the third, fourth, and fifth days, when there was no rain or human culture. But from the earth, still saturated with moisture, a mist went up and watered the garden where man was placed to dress and keep it. *Birks.*——This paragraph forms the introduction to the history of man, and is by no means a second record of creation ; but it shows, in supplementing the first chapter, how the earth was prepared for a habitation for man —a sphere for his activity, and a place for the revelation of God to man. O.

**4.** The word "generations," *toledoth*, which occurs for the first time in this verse, meets us again continually at the head of every principal section of the Book of Genesis. Thus 5 : 1, we have "the book (or account) of the generations of Adam," in which the descendants of Adam are traced to Noah. From 6 : 9 we have the generations of Noah, where the history of Noah and his sons is given. In 10 : 1 we come upon the generations of the sons of Noah, where the genealogical table and the history of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japhet are recorded. Ch. 11 : 10–26 gives us the generations of Shem. Ch. 11 : 27 begins the generations of Terah, the father of Abram ; 25 : 12, the generations of Ishmael ; 25 : 19, the generations of Isaac ; 36 : 1, the generations of Esau ; 37 : 2, the generations of Jacob, which are continued to the end of the book. The application of the word here is very appropriate. The primary creation of all things had just been recorded ; the sacred writer is about to describe more in detail the results of creation. And as the history of a man's family is called the "book of his generations," so the history of the world's productions is called "the generations of the heavens and the earth." E. H. B.——Probabilities favor the supposition of previously written documents, these probabilities arising mainly from the strong presumption that such genealogical records as abound in Genesis, coupled so largely with numbers, would be put in writing before the age of Moses. Men who had the knowledge of writing would certainly appreciate its utility for the preservation of such facts as these. And further ; the very use of the word "generations" here in the sense of history, and much more still the statement (Gen. 5 : 1), "This is the *book* of the generations of Adam," raise this presumption nearly or quite to a certainty. In making up the historical portions of the Scriptures it seems rational to assume that the Lord moved "holy men of old" to put in writing such facts falling under their personal observation and immediate knowledge as he deemed useful for these sacred records. The divine policy seems to have been (in this case as in miracles) never to introduce the supernatural, the miraculous, to do what the natural might accomplish equally well. On this principle inspired men were moved of God to use their own eyes and minds in writing

Scripture history in all cases when the facts came within their certain knowledge. There were facts, like these of the creation, which fell under no human eye, and which therefore do not come under this principle. Some form of direct revelation from God is to be assumed here. H. C.

**Heaven and earth.** While astronomy tells us of the extent of creation, geology informs us of its antiquity; and the impression induced by surveying unnumbered worlds is scarcely more solemn or grand than that which we derive from reviewing unnumbered ages. We pass from the abysses of space only to be lost in the abysses of duration, and we are transported by the retrospect into depths of the past, where all reckoning fails us, and the lapse of centuries is reduced to undiscernible insignificance. *King.*

The first expression, "the heaven and the earth," comprehends all created things, the universe; the second, "earth and heaven," takes in only the earth and that portion of the universe immediately connected with it. The historian first asserts that God is the creator of all created things, then narrates the manner in which this earth was prepared for man's abode by the same Almighty Being, so as to leave no room for the eternity of matter, nor yet for two Creators, one of the high and holy spiritual world, the other of this lower material world. *McCaul.*

**The earth.** Continents, islands, headlands, all conformed themselves to the great design for man's development and trial; as though in God's book all the members of the great scheme were written while as yet there was none of them. Nor is there any end of wonders, of knowledge and wisdom open to the discovery of man, if he will but patiently trace the great design. In the hot, damp periods, while the beds of coal were forming, who could have told in these the purposes of the Creator? The metals and metallic oxides injected into the veins of the rocks, or mingled with earthy substances—who could have seen in these any significance beyond chance, or sport, or caprice? Yet without the waterfalls, caused by the upheavings or irregular deposits of earth; without the coal, the iron, the silver, the copper, the gold, where would have been the arts, the commerce, the development, the history of man! Nothing appears to have been left out of the Lord's plan! Nothing undesigned! Nothing without amazing foresight, and amazing reach of wisdom! Yet had beings like us stood by at any of these periods, what could they have comprehended of the wonders of Jehovah's works that were transpiring before their eyes? *Review.*

Geology shows us how, among the "many mansions," a "place" was here "prepared" for man—framed, finished, and furnished specially for his needs, before he was introduced. Chemistry tells of the perilous secret of the air, health wrought out of poisons, and these kept in diffusion by a special and beautiful contrivance. Botany tells us of the cereal—the "herb bearing seed"—given peculiarly to man, never originating in the wild state, and kept only by his hand. Paleontology and physiology show and explain the significance of the order of succession, in which the higher forms subject the earlier and lower to their use. The comparative studies of nature and man show how, in the former, ores have been hidden, seas interposed, contrivances introduced, mysteries obtruded, penalties imposed, as if by beckoning, by challenging, and by whip and spur, to bring man onward to his true destiny. *J. B. Thomas.*

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Whence do these chapters come? There they stand and ever continue to stand, often as it has been attempted to explain them away; and there they will remain until the end of the world, until the conclusion of God's kingdom on earth joins hands with the beginning, and the light of the beginning will again be recognized in the light of the end, and the light of the end in the light of the beginning, that God may be all in all. *Staib.*

# Section 23.

## IN EDEN. CONDITION. FELLOWSHIP. WORK. TEST.

GENESIS 2 : 8–17.

8 AND the LORD God planted a garden eastward, in Eden ; and there he put the man whom
9 he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree
10 of the knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and
11 from thence it was parted, and became four heads. The name of the first is Pishon : that is
12 it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold ; and the gold of that land
13 is good : there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon :
14 the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel : that is it which goeth in front of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.
15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep
16 it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest
17 freely eat : but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Unlike other ancient historians, Moses has no fabulous ages. There is in his clear, consistent, unmatched record, no uncertainty, no fable, no conjecture, no chasm. By its sure and steady light we are conducted through the long night of ages, back to the very threshold of creation, and placed beside the first human pair in the garden of Eden. E. C. W.

**8. The Lord God.** Elohim, of whom Gen. 1 speaks as the God of the universe, becomes, in the second and third chapters, Jehovah, or the God of salvation He becomes such when He plants and prepares the garden of Eden to be the dwelling-place of man, and the starting-point in his history. K.——We live in Messiah's world. The divine Personage who is here called the LORD God, and who spoke to Adam in the garden, was the angel Jehovah, who afterward appeared to the patriarchs, led the Israelites through the wilderness, tabernacled among men in the form of a man, is still the head of his Church, and will again appear to the world. The angel Jehovah commences a new dispensation, which, when it has passed through its three forms, Patriarchal, Levitical, and Christian, will be terminated by reviving and perfecting the primeval happiness of mankind, in that future Paradise, of which the garden of Eden was but an emblem. G. T.

**A garden in Eden.** The site of Paradise is to be sought for in Babylonia. Eden, as we learn from the cuneiform records, was the ancient name of the "field" or plain of Babylonia, where the first living creatures had been created. *Sayce.*——The Garden here described, connected as it is with the well-known names of the Euphrates and Tigris, can hardly be other than a definite area, unknown indeed to us and probably undiscoverable but certainly in the East, and agreeing in general with what appears to have been the starting-point of the history of the human race. We have on the whole two general classes of opinion : the one which places the site of Paradise near the Persian Gulf ; the other, placing it somewhere in the highlands of Armenia. H. W. P.

**11–14.** Of the four rivers mentioned as connected with it, two still bear the same names, the Hiddekel or Tigris, and the Euphrates. Near the sources of these streams the other two greatest rivers of Western Asia have their rise ; the Kizil-Ermak, anciently Halys, flowing into the Black Sea, possibly the same as the Pison ; and the Araxes, which, joined by the Kur or Cyrus, flows into the Caspian, and may have been the Gihon. There can be little reasonable doubt that Eden was situated in the highlands of Armenia, in Asia Minor, somewhere near the sources of these four rivers. W. G. B.——We can at least say that somewhere in this region of Armenia eastward, perhaps on the southern slope of the Taurus, though some would prefer a somewhat more southerly site, it certainly is not unscriptural to find the home of our first parents, as well as (in this general region) of the second set of progenitors of the race. S. C. B.

**15. Put the man into the garden.** The first human pair have their first earthly want met by their Maker in a *home*—a quiet,

beautiful spot in which trees of beauty for the eye and of nutritious fruitage for subsistence supplied some pleasing occupation for the mind and wholesome labor for the hand ; where, happy in each other's love and blessed with the freest communion with their Maker, not a thing was lacking to fill their cup of joy. *If* it might only *last*—and for this, nothing more was needful save that their moral nature should be cultured, their faith and love and obedience strengthened up to the point of being thoroughly, fully confirmed : then their lot would have been most blessed. As a requisite means for such culture, God subjected their faith and obedience to one gentle test—to one point of moral trial. To have endured this successfully would have made them morally stronger and have drawn them yet nearer in love and trust to their Great Father. H. C.——The Bible account of the *origin of religion* is that man began his journey on this globe not as a deserted orphan, turned adrift to seek God as best he could, but in communion with the Father of spirits. God talked with him, and he could talk with God. God marked for him the path of duty, and it lay in his choice to walk in it, or to wander from it. *E. R Conder.*

The happiness of our first parents in Paradise must have far exceeded anything which we can now imagine. Formed in the image of God, with all their faculties perfect and their appetites in subjection, undisturbed by care, and as yet unassailed by temptation, they walked with God as a man walketh with his friend, and enjoyed communion with heaven, though their abode was upon earth. *Bush.*——It is apparent, from the account of Moses, that the first man in the state of integrity was (as we have heard Tertullian expressing it) " the intimate friend of God," that he should " bear heavenly things," and sustain the approaches of the majestic presence of God without any regret or starting back ; that he could maintain a conference or discourse with God (as we have heard Basil speaking) in the same tongue or language. It is likewise evident from the same history, that Adam in the state of integrity had a knowledge of certain things unaccountable upon any other hypothesis but this, that his mind was irradiated with a divine illumination. *Bull.*——We cannot doubt that the Mediator of this Revelation was the Son of God. Ere sin entered into God's fair universe, and while as yet was no estrangement between Him and any of His creatures, and so no need as yet of atonement and reconciliation, there was, for all this, need of One who should stand between the uncreated and the created life ; One who, Himself uncreated and divine, could yet enter into relation with created life as existing through, in, and for Him ; One in whom the creature could see, and through whom the creature could know, as much as its capacity could bear and contain of God. *Medd.*

Setting aside all that is purely imaginative, we know that man, in Paradise, was a stranger to disease, deformity, and pain : that the perfect organism of his body made existence a delight, and brought no shadow or depression upon the soul. The *mind* of man was clear and true. Unlike irrational animals impelled by blind instinct, man was capable of understanding the will of his Maker. When we add that man was originally *holy*, we do not intend that his holiness was created in the same manner as the faculties of his mind, or that it was involuntary, like the natural instincts and appetences ; but simply this, that all his thoughts, affections, and actions were right : that his obedience was perfect—that there was no conflict between the several parts of his nature—that the voluntary obedience of man was so complete, that he was the very image of his Maker—his holy affections, responding unto the holy affections of God. A "golden age" indeed was that when the human conscience spake approvingly, without one impeachment, without one compunction of remorse ; man rejoicing in his own conscious innocence, and God pronouncing this his last and greatest work superlatively good. . . . Last of all was *worship of the Creator*, and *God's* benediction. The worship of God by sinless man !—not with mediatory rites and sacrifices, not by smoking altars and bleeding beasts, not by typical sacraments and priestly intercessions ; but by direct, immediate, personal, sensible communion. With no shame on his cheek, no fear in his soul, man stood erect before his Maker in all the confidence and joy of perfect innocence. Then was it that God abode with man as with his child, smiling upon him morning, noon, and night, and walking with him amid the bowers of Eden. *W. Adams.*

All through the course of the creation, at intervals the narrative has pictured the Creat r himself as having a benevolent joy in the perfection of that which He had brought into being. But in Man the narrative presents the Creator as the Father producing a child in His own image, after His likeness ; and then with a Father's thoughtful care, providing for every want of his compound nature, for his physical comfort and enjoyment, for the gratification of his tastes and his sense of beauty ; for his affec

tions and his social nature through the medium of the Family, and of that society which must grow out of the Family ; and for his spiritual communing with Himself, the Father of spirits, in that beatific intercourse which was the privilege and joy of man at the beginning. In all these arrangements, designed to be perpetual, we behold the love and the care of God. Wherever these arrangements have failed of their beneficent purposes, it has been solely through the perversity of man ; and just so far as man shall return to the original design of the Creator, in the institutions of the Family and of the Sabbath, in the maintenance of pure domestic love and pure spiritual worship, will human society be advanced in integrity and blessedness, and once more approximate to that Paradise which was the glory of its beginning and the realization of which in the hereafter will be that golden age toward which all poetry and prophecy direct our hopes. J. P. T.

**To dress it and to keep it.** No sooner was man created than occupation was found for his whole nature, —body, mind, tongue, soul, and conscience ; for even in his state of innocence and holiness, improvement and development were to be gained by exercise. His body was to be exercised, in dressing and keeping a garden ; his mind, in studying the animals around him, and the other works of God ; his tongue, or power of speech, in conversation and devotion ; his soul, in loving his earthly companion, and in loving, praising, and exalting his God ; and his conscience, in obeying God's commandments. W. G. B.

In the midst of a Nature, the forces of which are henceforth under discipline, man begins his proper work. He asserts his claims as the heir of this beautiful domain, and endeavors to take possession of it by the twofold labor of knowledge and action ; he ' dresses the garden," according to the Scriptural expression ; he distinguishes between different objects, and exercises his powers in giving them names ; he sets before himself aims, and finds means for their attainment ; he modifies things in conformity with his wishes and his needs ; he develops the inexhaustible resources of his intelligence and his will, --those twin-sisters, the loyal agents of all our activity. At the same time his feelings awake ; his heart opens to the sweet affections of family life, and to the pure enjoyments of nature. It is the drama of the soul's life which is now beginning. What will be its end? *Godet.*

The garden has not only its fruit trees, but it has also its flowers. It always presupposes that there are human beings to enjoy it as well as to take care of it. The idea of God's planting the garden, carries with it the thought that he was fashioning it for something higher than animals ; that he was enclosing a choice spot for a creature who could enjoy whatever was comely and pleasant. It was therefore an acknowledgment that when he made the garden, this world was to be given over in its dominion to a higher intelligence than was found among the highest grade of created animals.

The ordinance of labor was established at that time. God took man and put him in the garden " to dress it and to keep it." This ordinance of the Lord has sometimes been connected with the curse, but that is a very different kind of labor. " God worketh hitherto and I work," said Christ. There always was and always must have been the ground and the necessity for the ordinance of work. *Billinger.*—— The blessedness of God is in unwearied and beneficent action ; and man, made in his image, was immediately assigned an occupation. Man's first employment was to till that very earth out of which he sprung, and in the bosom of which he is to find his grave. Work and labor are not synonyms. With the latter we associate difficulty—sometimes hard and depressing drudgery —man's work at first was pleasant only, restraining and pruning the exuberance of nature's spontaneous growth ; sin has changed that easy occupation for the sweat of the face, and the bending of the back. *W. Adams.*

That which was man's storehouse was also his workhouse ; his pleasure was his task : paradise served not only to feed his senses but to exercise his hands. If happiness had consisted in doing nothing, man had not been employed ; all his delights could not have made him happy in an idle life. Man, therefore, is no sooner made than he is set to work : neither greatness nor perfection can privilege a folded hand ; he must labor, because he was happy ; how much more we, that we may be ! This first labor of his was, as without necessity, so without pains, without weariness ; how much more cheerfully we go about our businesses, so much nearer we come to our paradise. *Bp. H.*——Paradise itself was not a place of exemption from work. We were none of us sent into the world to be idle. He that made us these souls and bodies has given us something to work *with ;* and he that gave us this earth for our habitation has made us something to work *on.* If either a high extraction, or a great estate, or a large dominion, or perfect innocency, or a genius for pure contemplation, or a small family, could have given a man a writ of ease, Adam had not been set to

work ; but he that gave us being has given us business, to serve him and our generation, and to work out our salvation ; if we do not mind our business, we are unworthy of our being and maintenance. Secular employments will very well consist with a state of innocency, and a life of communion with God. The sons and heirs of heaven, while they are here in this world, have something to do about this earth, which must have its share of their time and thoughts ; and if they do it with an eye to God, they are as truly serving him in it as when they are upon their knees. H.

*The Test.*

**16. Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat.** If there is to be an education of the human race, one of the first acts of the Divine Educator will be, to provoke a struggle between duty and pleasure, between conscious will and blind instinct. This is the meaning of that primeval trial to which man was subjected. What a crisis was here ! If the conscious will, supported by the sense of duty, triumphed over natural inclination, then it would see opening before it a career of new conflicts and victories. But if inclination triumphed, man's will was reduced to slavery ; and deprived of the free disposal of himself, he would under the dominion of the flesh fall lower and lower. This crisis was then at once inevitable and decisive. It was for man, whatever might happen, the transition from a merely natural life to historic development. *Godet.*

Mark God's mode of teaching. He issues a command. This is required in order to bring forth into consciousness the hitherto latent sensibility to moral obligation which was laid in the original constitution of man's being. A command implies a superior whose right it is to command, and an inferior whose duty it is to obey. The only ultimate and absolute ground of supremacy is creating, and of inferiority, being created. This is man's first lesson in morals. It calls up in his breast the sense of duty, of right, of responsibility. M ——Human character as such, whether innocent or fallen, is made for moral government, for obedience to the law of a superior, and for the acknowledgment of the rights of equals, as well as for the reciprocation of benevolence ; so that display of divine justice or righteousness and of divine goodness or kindness would be needed for the education of the race as much if unfallen, as in its present fallen condition. *Woolsey.*

The command has two clauses,—a permissive and a prohibitive. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." This displays in conspicuous terms the benignity of the Creator. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." This signalizes the absolute right of the Creator over all the trees, and over man himself. One tree only is withheld, which, whatever were its qualities, was at all events not necessary to the well-being of man. All the others that were likely for sight and good for food, including the tree of life, are made over to him by free grant. M.——The vast freedom granted to him proved the goodness of the Creator ; the one exception taught him that he was to live under a *law ;* and that law was enforced by a practical penalty, of which he was mercifully warned. We must not regard the prohibition merely as a test of obedience, nor the penalty as arbitrary. The knowledge forbidden to him was of a kind which would corrupt his nature –so corrupt it as to make him unfit, as well as unworthy, to live forever. P. S.——It is quite evident that this knowledge could not be any physical effect of the tree, seeing its fruit was forbidden. It is obvious also that evil is as yet known in this fair world only as the negative of good. Hence the tree is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because by the command concerning it man comes to this knowledge. M.

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much ;" because it is a property of the moral law that its infraction is not measured by the extent of the transgression, but by the intent of the transgressor. The smallness of the test is an evidence of the delicacy of the poise with which God has adjusted the law to man's moral constitution. *Bullinger.* ——The test of obedience is so far from being trivial or out of place, as has been imagined, that it is the proper and the only object immediately available for these purposes. The immediate want of man is food. The kind of food primarily designed for him is the fruit of trees. As the law must be laid down before man proceeds to an act of appropriation, the matter of reserve and consequent test of obedience is the fruit of a tree. Only by this can man at present learn the lessons of morality. To devise any other means, not arising from the actual state of things in which man was placed, would have been arbitrary and unreasonable. The immediate sphere of obedience lies in the circumstances in which he actually stands. These afforded no occasion for any other command than that which is given. Adam had no father, or mother, or

neighbor, male or female, and therefore the second table of the law could not apply. But he had a relation to his Maker, and legislation on this could not be postponed. The command assumes the kindest, most intelligible, and convenient form for the mind of primeval man. M.

——The principle of conscious obedience to the divine will is the first step in moral progress, and the essential element of true happiness. Consequently the conscious recognition of that will is the first condition of man's development as a moral being, and of his continued progress in holiness and happiness. Hence a test was required to awaken that conscious recognition, and to give occasion for the exercise of his freedom of choice and action. A test of obedience is, therefore, an expression of the truest love and care ; and the more simple the test the better it serves the purpose intended by the love that appoints it. Hence numerous acts of obedience were not made the test. One act was forbidden ; all else was allowed. Of the principle of obedience no test could have been more simple and direct, or more easily apprehended ; and hence it was a perfect test. T. J. C.

There the tree stood before their eyes in the midst of the garden—every sight of it suggesting their Great Father's word—not to be eaten at all on penalty of death. Every time they put down the temptation to eat of it they will become stronger in their spirit of obedience and more happy in God. It was a means of continual culture in holiness, ever leading onward and upward into deeper communion with God and more assured and joyous submission to his will, more strength of purpose in obedience, more delight in whatever self-denial obedience might involve. Surely it is not too much to say that they might make this means of moral culture a priceless blessing to their souls. How could paradise meet the greatest of all their wants—the want of their new-born souls—without this one provision for proving and invigorating their loving obedience to their God? Need we then raise the question—*What was God's purpose in this prohibition?* The answer is at hand—To accomplish precisely this result ; to give the first human pair a test of obedience which should be naturally a means of moral culture and of growth in holiness.

It was a natural necessity of their moral nature that this question of obeying God, always and everywhere, should come to issue. As surely as they were moral beings, capable of knowing duty and of doing it, born into being with susceptibilities to happiness which sometimes must be virtuously denied at the demand of God and of the greater good, so surely they must meet this trial sooner or later, in one form or another, until they become so strong in their holy purpose, so fixed in the spirit of love and obedience to God that temptation to sin is of course spurned away and duty is done forevermore without a question. Moral trial, therefore, if not in this precise form, yet in some analogous form, is the necessary means of developing moral strength and confirmed holiness ; is therefore the natural pathway to the blessedness of heaven. Thus, with no wavering of doubt, we may vindicate God's ways toward man in this first great moral trial brought on our race. H. C.

Adam's trial consisted in the exercise of his *faith and dependence on God,* and the proper subordination of his sensual appetite to his spiritual affections. His trial was, whether he would so far believe and depend on God as to look forward to the complete attainment of spiritual perfection in conformity with the divine plan, and in obedience to the divine command ; or seek an happiness for himself, independent of his Creator, by applying for it to a tempting object of temporal gratification. In short, the grand trial was, what it ever hath been, and what it ever will be till the present world shall cease to exist, a trial between flesh and spirit, between earth and heaven ; whether things visible or invisible, things suited to the animal or spiritual condition of the original man, should have the preference with him ; in a word, whether Adam would walk by *sight,* or by *faith.* *Daubeny.*

All agree that the object of the sacred writer was to describe the *first probation of human nature.* A special act of *obedience* was presented, and the conditions of probation were simply these : *obey,* and retain all the pleasures and rewards of innocence ; *disobey,* and there shall follow the pangs of remorse, and the displeasure of God. Obey, and live ; disobey, and die. The thing to be observed is, that obedience—obedience alone, nothing but obedience- describes the original probation of man. There is no mixture of mercy, of forgiveness, in the terms of it. Mercy is a gratuity offered to guilt.* Nothing of this was proposed to original innocence, for it was not needed while innocence was retained. It matters not at all whether the interdicted act be in itself great or small, vast or trivial—it was a *test* of obedience.

Observe the *favorable auspices* of this original probation. There was no propensity in man's nature to evil. There was no derangement in his constitution inclining him to sin. Body and

soul were absolutely perfect in their organization. There was no proclivity, no bias, in the wrong direction. Man was the very likeness of his Maker, with no more disposition or inclination to evil than in the holy nature of God. The *terms* of the probation were definitely *understood*. This is essential to all fairness and equity when the principle of obedience is to be tested. Acts which proceed from ignorance or accident are not to be confounded with the intelligent and purposed infraction of positive injunctions.

When serpent subtlety suggested the first temptation to the mind of Eve, she quickly repelled it, on the ground that the act to which she was solicited was forbidden by the express interdict of the Creator ; thus proving that the first condition of legal probation was complied with, in that the test of obedience was well and perfectly understood. The *circumstances* of the probation were in *all other respects* eminently *auspicious*. The liberty allowed was the very largest. There was no pressure of want to necessitate transgression. All the delights of Eden were at the command of its innocent tenants. The amplest range of enjoyment was afforded ; all created things were at their disposal, save that one, which it was their pleasure to avoid, because obedience to their Maker was a delight. Infidelity may scoff at the trivial nature of the act interdicted ; but the obvious reply is, that acts are not to be measured by their own littleness or largeness, or the brevity of the time in which they are performed, but by their *relations* —the smallest serving as a test as well as the largest. With the mention of these several circumstances, we cannot conceive how human nature could have been tested, as to the principle of obedience, on conditions more hopeful, more auspicious, more equitable, than it actually was in Eden. *W. Adams.*

**17. In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.** Heb., *dying thou shalt die.* Implying by the utmost emphasis of expression the absolute certainty of the punishment denounced. The threatening we suppose to have embraced all the evils spiritual, temporal, and eternal, which we learn elsewhere to be included in term *death* as a punishment for sin. The meaning is not that temporal death should be inflicted the literal day on which the offence was committed, but on the day of his eating he was to become *dead* in trespasses and sins ; the seeds of decay and dissolution were to become sown in his body, which should thenceforth become *mortal*, and finally be brought down to the grave ; and he should be made liable to what is usually understood by the pains of *eternal death* in another world. Adam, indeed, might not at the time have understood the full import of this dreadful sentence, having had no experience of anything which would enable him to do so ; but *we* are taught by the actual result what sense to affix to the terms. *Bush.*

What kind of death God here means, we must gather from the kind of life forfeited. It was in every respect a happy one : the life embraced equally body and soul. In man's soul prevailed right knowledge, and a proper moderation of all desires ; his bodily powers were perfect, and so he was entirely free from death. His life on earth, indeed, would only have been a temporal one ; but he would have passed on to heaven without pain or dying. Under the word death is comprehended all that is miserable ; and to this Adam by his fall became subject. As soon as the judgment was pronounced on him, Adam came under the dominion of death, until grace, which followed thereon, brought the means of salvation. *Calvin.*

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Man is represented as from the first placed in direct moral relations with his Maker. A specially prepared home, work, the Sabbath, marriage, and a positive command the test of obedience, bless and test his life. Disobedience is represented as putting him, as it needs must, in a sadly altered relation to God. He is called to account, found guilty, sentenced to the loss of Eden, made subject to death. No explanation is given of that awful word. Nevertheless, man retains his highest privilege, direct converse with his Maker. We see God reasoning even with Cain when his mind is dull with discontent and murderous jealousy, seeking to win him to repentance, and cheering him as Adam and Eve were cheered after their transgression, with words of grace and promise. *E. R. Conder.*

# Section 24.

## TEMPTATION. DISOBEDIENCE. FALL.

GENESIS 3 : 1–7.

1 Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.
And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?
2 And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat:
3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
4 of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not
5 surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened,
6 and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was
good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make
one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with
7 her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were
naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Genesis opens with the account of the tempter in the garden, securing the fall of our first parents; and the Apocalypse closes with the prediction of his final overthrow and destruction in company with all those who have persistently adhered to his revolt. The intervening books consistently speak of his character, of his direct antagonism to Christ, and of his schemes and influence during the world's history, and warn us against his snares. *W. W. Patton.*

The narrative of this chapter must be either all plain matter of fact, or all allegory. For no writer of true history would mix plain matter of fact with allegory in the same continued narrative, without any intimation of a transition from the one to the other. If therefore any part of this narrative be matter of fact, no part of it is allegorical. If any part be allegorical, no part is naked matter of fact. If the formation of the woman out of man be allegory, the woman must be an allegorical woman. The man must therefore be an allegorical man; for of such a man only the allegorical woman will be a meet companion If the man be allegorical, his Paradise is an allegorical garden; the trees that grew in it, allegorical trees; the rivers that watered it, allegorical rivers; and thus we may ascend to the very beginning of the creation, and conclude at last that the heavens are allegorical heavens, and the earth an allegorical earth. Thus the whole history of the creation will be an allegory, of which the real subject is not disclosed, and in this absurdity the whole scheme of allegorizing ends *Bp. Horsley.*

The reasons for regarding the Biblical account of the Fall as historical, are these: It is organically united with the narrative of the creation, which takes the usual formula of Hebrew history—"these are the generations." It appears in a Book which by uniformly and distinctly recognizing one living and personal God, and by distinctly defining man's moral relation to Him, leaves no room for a mythology. It is recorded in the old, simple, objective style of historical narrative; reminding us of the significant fact that, unlike other nations of antiquity with whom the poetic element preceded the historical, Hebrew poetry always looks back to Hebrew history. While the mythological, moreover, is always national, local, and particular, the Biblical account, both of the Creation and the Fall, has the character of true universality. The account also, in connection with that of the creation, forms the introduction to an acknowledged history—that of the Theocracy. It is the only account which, from its view of sin, assumes and really possesses a historical character. In all the ancient accounts, apart from Biblical influence, sin is either an unreal or an eternal thing. Pantheism, as in the Egyptian, Phœnician and Babylonian traditions, by treating sin as an unreality, renounces its historical existence. Dualism, of which Parseeism, Brahmaism, and the later Manichæism, are forms, by regarding it as eternal, make a first sin, as the act of a free being—impossible. It is only where both the finitude and the individual liberty of man are apprehended, as they are in Genesis, that the nature of sin is recognized, and a first sin is possible. The Biblical account, too, is full of historical details and facts. Thus, it contains a minute geographical description of Paradise: the condition of mankind, threatened in this narrative as a punishment,

actually exists : and the account of the same human progenitors, here brought into view, is continuously carried forward as history. Then, again, sin and salvation—the two fundamental ideas of the narrative -form the germ of which the entire Bible is the development. In addition to all which, the historical character of the narrative is repeatedly recognized in the New Testament, where the presence of this spiritual agent in the natural serpent is distinctly recognized. J. H

The narrative of the first sin has not only a consistency that grows on the contemplation, but offers the only solution of the dim traditions of the distant past. It offers perhaps all the help that can be given when it traces the source of the seduction to an *outer* influence, distinctly explained in the New Testament, as "that old serpent which is called the devil and Satan," and when it couples with the persuasions of the appetite the specious inducement of a higher good—"ye shall be as gods"—and a pressure applied to the more emotional of the pair. And while the real agent is thus identified with Satan, I see—in accordance with a narrative which described all *as it appeared*—no fair mode of escaping from the recognition of the actual objective appearance of a serpent, chosen for the reason suggested in the narrative, the subtlety of the movement that comes and goes so stealthily and so unexpectedly, and the association thereby awakened. The one grave objection, that this is the concession of a miraculous transaction for the purpose of deception, is perhaps sufficiently answered by saying that to them it was no miracle,—for there was no adequate knowledge of a settled course of nature,—but an ordinary phenomenon.

Striking confirmation is found in the ancient and widespread traditions of the East, pointing definitely to precisely such a transaction. We not only find the sacred tree that gave immortality—the Indian Kalpanksham, the Persian Hom, the Arab Tuba, the Greek Lotus, the tree in the coffin at Warka, and Babylon named "the place of the tree of life ;" we also find the ruin of the race connected with the eating from a tree, in the Edda of the north, in the Zendavesta, and in the legend of Thibet, and a deceiver also appears, who is in some cases the serpent. Indeed the serpent figures largely in traditions, in Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, Phœnicia and elsewhere, as the enemy of the gods. The confirmation becomes more definite and singular still. We find not only a Babylonian cylinder of the 9th century B.C. showing the sacred tree with attendant figures and eagle-headed guardians, and another cylinder showing the sacred tree with "attendant Cherubim ;" but we find another early Babylonian cylinder with sacred tree showing fruit, a seated human figure on each side, each with a hand extended toward it, and a serpent behind the one whose hand is nearest to the fruit. S. C. B.

**1–6.** *Temptation* is now presented to the occupants of Eden. Temptation is not sin, but it seems to be implied in the very nature of man's probation. Here have we the first allusion which, like a hinge or link, connects the history of our race with events which occurred before man was made—a connection which subsists now, and is to continue, in one form or another, when this world is consumed—so binding forever, past, present, and future events of Providence, into one vast and endless system, ever revolving and unfolding. Sin existed in the universe before it blighted Eden. Some of the angels kept not their first estate ; and revelation positively instructs us that man's apostasy, man's redemption, and man's final destiny, have direct relations to the history of those who fell from heaven before man was fashioned out of the dust. *W. Adams.*

The characters in this high tragedy are all worthy the grandeur of the occasion. They are Jehovah ; a fallen rebel of the spiritual universe ; and man, a spirit, in the image of God, combined with a physical body. The test act of the occasion, too—however men of low conceptions have sneered at it—was equal to the character of the parties in grandeur and dignity. It was indeed the simple taste of fruit ; but that tasting a high, solemn, sacramental act. It was not simply the eating of fruit, but the touching of the sacramental tree. S. R.

**1.** The serpent is here called a beast of the field ; that is, neither a domesticated animal nor one of the smaller sorts. The Lord God had made it, and therefore it was a creature called into being on the same day with Adam. It is not the wisdom, but the wiliness of the serpent which is here noted. M.——The serpent, as a creature of God, has in itself nothing devilish. The real tempter could not be an animal, but only a higher evil spirit, the devil, who made use of the animal as his instrument. There is no mention in Scripture of any personal bodily manifestation of this evil spirit, and it is altogether impossible. Accordingly, he was obliged to speak through the medium of the serpent. *Gerl.*——In whatever form appearing, in whatever manner addressing the woman, the real tempter—as elsewhere abundantly declared in scripture—was a spiritual being, already fallen,

called here and elsewhere the Serpent, from his insidiousness ; called also the Devil, as he is a slanderer and calumniator ; called also Satan, as he is the hater and the adversary ; called also the Wicked One, as pre eminent among creatures for his infamous moral character. S. R.

That the real personal devil was there, the responsible agent, is surely implied by our Lord (Jno. 8 : 44). In 2 Cor. 11 : 3, Paul gives us a plain, historic version of this narrative. But Satan is perhaps most sharply identified in the descriptive points made by John (Rev. 12 : 9 and 20 : 2). Our Lord, as also Paul and John, saw in this narrative a real Satan, and also the veritable serpent made his instrument. That Satan should use such an instrument is manifestly within and not beyond his power. It has in certain points its analogy in the demoniacal possessions recorded by the Evangelists. As to power he is spoken of as the god and prince of this world, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." H. C. — There is but *one* "devil and his *angels*." In Rev. 12 : 9, we read of the great dragon : "that old serpent, the devil and Satan." In this form he seduced our first parents, and effected the ruin of mankind in their original head. From that period his empire on earth commences, as erected in rebellion against the kingdom of God and his Christ ; an empire composed of ignorance, idolatery, impiety, cruelty, and vice ; alienation from God, and disobedience to his holy will and law : these are the ingredients and principles of Satan's empire in the world. *R. Hall.*

It is with no cloudy vagueness that the personal existence of the spirit of evil is revealed in Holy Scripture. In history, prophecy and in parable is the Tempter brought before us, and every quality, every action, every attribute which can indicate personality is referred to him in language which cannot be explained away. The records of the old dispensation and the writings of the new, alike depict him as pre-eminent in power among the angels who lost their first estate, and as ever compassing the destruction of the souls of men. We, then, are neither wise nor prudent to talk of allegories, or rhetorical personification, or in bolder unbelief to doubt or deny the existence and the power of the chief of the fallen spirits. It were far wiser to recognize our foe, and to seek the strength with which to contend with him. *Perry.*——The devil's hatred of us bears date with our very being, and his opposition is as early as his hatred ; it is of too active a virulence to lie still and dormant, without putting forth itself in all the actings of a mischievous hostility. The devil hates and maligns us for the privileges of our creation, but much more for the mercies of our redemption : and as soon as ever we list ourselves in the service of the great Captain of our salvation, he bids present defiance to us and proclaims perpetual war against us ; which he will never be wanting to carry on with all the force, art, and industry that malice, bounded within the limits of created power, can reach unto. *South.*——His great business is to draw and drive others to sin ; and therefore, as God is "the holy one," so Satan is called "the wicked one." The devil may fitly be called "the evil one," for he is the oldest sinner (1 John 3 : 8) ; the greatest sinner (Eph. 6 : 12) ; the father of sin (John 8 : 44). So all the sins in the world are by this furtherance, both actual and original. Again, he hath a great stroke in temptation, that he is the artificer, the designer, the improver of them ; therefore he is called "the tempter" (Matt. 4 : 3). *Manton.*—— Had our first parents actually considered the nearness of God to them when they were tempted to eat of the forbidden fruit, they had not probably so easily been overcome by the temptation. Let us consider that God is as near to observe us as the devil to solicit us ; yea, nearer. The devil stands by us, but God is in us. We may have a thought the devil knows not, but not a thought but God is actually present with, as our souls are with the thoughts they think ; nor can any creature attract our hearts, if our minds were fixed on that invisible presence that contributes to that excellency and sustains it, and considered that no creature could be so present with us as the Creator is. *Charnock.*

Without temptation Adam would not have fallen ; without temptation you and I would not have fallen. But without temptation would any have *risen?* What would character be without temptation? The revelations of God, and the great redemption of God, with all its accessories, are for the sake of character. Character is treasure laid up in heaven ; character is salvation ; character is life eternal. And character is in the heart just what intellect is in the mind, and muscle in the body ; it is moral stamina, ethical toughness, and nothing toughens but discipline ; and discipline means trial, strain, temptation. Therefore we will ever remember that life is a training-school ; that its appliances are arranged with reference to the establishment within us of that which is undecaying, and which we may carry over with us into the vast life we are so rapidly entering. We will try and not repine at the warfare we have so constantly

to wage against the evil that is within us and without us. Every thorn in the flesh and in the heart, we will remember, has in it a gracious purpose ; is pressed by a divine hand and nicely adjusted to our endurance ; that there is nothing in life so corrupt that it *need* defile us, nothing in experience so heavy that it *need* crush us. Only we will remember that it is not safe for us to go into our wildernesses alone, but like Jesus, who entered there in the power of the Spirit. Under the stress of trial and difficulty of any kind it is only God's grace that is sufficient for us, and in that grace will we find our security. C. H. P.

**Hath God said?** No startling proposal of disobedience is made, no advice, no persuasion to partake of the fruit is employed. The suggestion or assertion of the false only is plainly offered ; and the bewildered mind is left to draw its own false inferences, and pursue its own misguided course. The tempter addresses the woman as the more susceptible and unguarded of the two creatures he would betray. M. ——It is good to leave off learning where God hath left off teaching ; for they which have an ear where God hath no tongue, hearken not unto God, but to the tempter, as Eve did to the serpent. *H. Smith.*

The mode of approach, and the method of the temptation of an intelligent, sinless creature, is worthy the genius of the tempter for sublety. A blunt, outspoken attack on the covenant would have repelled his victim. So most adroitly, under form of an undisputed truth, he insinuates an enormous lie. Observe the form of his statement : "Yea hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree." This was what God said—and also it was not what God said. Observe, God had said, "of every tree," etc. In that form, the language conveys the idea of generous and almost unlimited freedom. But, as stated by the tempter—while grammatically true—yet it insinuates and is really to the effect, that a tyrannical and useless restraint has been laid upon man. S. R. ——Satan here states the exception, as if it had been the rule, and converts a general privilege, with one solitary exception, into an absolute prohibition. And such is ever the treacherous plan of the seducer from the paths of innocence. His grand object is to render obedience wearisome and constrained ; and to this end he conceals every privilege and magnifies every restraint, that he may alienate our affections from the laws of holiness, and from the friends of virtue and of our true happiness. *Hifferman.*

With apparently full reverence for God, he injects into the mind of Eve a doubt as to this command. If God has certainly spoken, he urges, obey ; but has He certainly spoken? It is only a doubt ; Satan does not deny that God has spoken. He denies nothing, he affirms nothing ; he simply questions. *Bryan.*——He insinuates into Eve's mind thoughts that God rather envied than designed their happiness, in forbidding them to eat of that one tree. Despair, which is the greatest instrument next to that of presumption, by which the devil draws men headlong into the fatal net of perdition, how and by what means does he cause it? Why, by representing God to the soul as a tyrant and a tormentor, rigid and implacable, exacting the utmost farthing from a poor bankrupt creature, that is nor worth it. By such diabolical rhetoric does he libel God to the hearts of His creatures. And he well knows that by these arts he does his business effectually ; forasmuch as it is impossible for the soul to love God, as long as it takes Him for an enemy and a destroyer. *South.*

Paradise was made for man, yet there I see the serpent. What marvel is it if my corruption find the serpent in my closet, in my table, when our holy parents found him in the midst of paradise! No sooner he is entered but he tempteth : he can no more be idle than harmless. I do not see him at any other tree ; he knew there was no danger in the rest ; I see him at the tree forbidden. How true a serpent is he in every point! in his insinuation to the place, in his choice of the tree, in his assault of the woman, in his plausibleness of speech to avoid terror, in his question to move doubt, in his reply to work distrust, in his protestation of safety, in his suggestion to envy and discontent, in his promise of gain! *Bp. H.*——Balaam could not *curse* Israel, but he could *tempt* Israel. The game which Satan had to play was to draw our first parents to sin, and so to separate between them and their God. Thus the Devil was, from the beginning, a murderer and the great mischief-maker. The whole race of mankind had here, as it were, but one neck, and at that Satan struck. The adversary and enemy is that wicked one. H.

**2. We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden.** The first assault of the insidious tempter is well sustained by the woman. He insinuates that they had been forbidden the use of *every* tree without exception. No, says the woman, it is not a prohibition of *every* tree. The Creator has allowed us the use of all the trees, with one exception. We may not eat of the tree in the midst of the garden. *Bush.*

——**3. Lest ye die.** Yet her reply was tainted with doubt. The threat, "Ye shall surely die," she rendered by the words, "lest ye die." God's verily was to her only a perhaps, and the death penalty was a risk and not a certainty. Here was the first sin—not the overt act, not the defiance of God's authority, but the doubt as to a clearly-revealed command of God—questioning hesitancy in the place of prompt obedience. *Bryan.*

**4. Ye shall not surely die.** As before he called in question God's kindness to man, so does he here deny God's veracity or truth; and deserves the character which our Saviour gives him, of "a liar." *Kidder.*——Unbelief is not only a great sin of itself, but one great cause of all other sins. It may be truly called the Mother of sin, as the devil is the Father: for it was that which by his instigation brought forth sin at first into the world; and it is that which still maintains and keeps it. When the old serpent assaulted our first parents, the first attack he made was upon their faith; and when that was once shaken, he soon overcame them. *Beveridge.*

**5. For God doth know.** *The first accuser* that ever was in the world was a *false accuser;* and that was the devil. The first false report he raised was of the Most High: unjustly accusing God Himself unto our mother Eve, in a few words, of no fewer than three great crimes at once, *Falsehood, Tyranny, and Envy.* He was then a *slanderous* accuser of his *Maker;* and he hath continued ever since a *malicious* accuser of his *brethren. Sanderson.* ——Thus still the Devil draws people into his interest by suggesting to them hard thoughts of God, and false hopes of benefit and advantage by sin. In opposition to him, always think well of God as the best good, and think ill of sin as the worst of evils: thus resist the Devil, and he will flee from us. H.

The offered suggestion was "that he should be like unto God" in this, "Knowing good and evil." Being in his creation invested with sovereignty of all inferior creatures, he was not needy of power or dominion. But being a spirit newly inclosed in a body of earth, he was fitted to be allured with appetite of light and liberty of knowledge. *Bacon.*

Satan is cunning and we are weak, and he will be too hard for us if he do but find us at all staggering in our resolutions to do nothing but what is *lawful;* or lending an ear to any persuasions for the doing of anything that is *unlawful.* By this very means he overcame our first mother Eve; and prevailed with her to taste of the forbidden fruit, though it were *unlawful,* by persuading her that it was *expedient.* To a Christian that desireth to make conscience of his ways, nothing can be truly *expedient* that he knows to be *unlawful. Sanderson.*——Satan gains our souls step by step; and his first allurement is the knowledge of what is wrong. He first tempts to the knowledge, and then to the commission of sin. Depend on it that our happiness and our glory in these matters is to be ignorant, as well as to be guiltless. Oh, thoughtless, and worse, cruel to your own selves, all ye who read what ye should not read, and hear what ye should not hear! How will you repent of your folly afterward! How will you despise yourselves, how weep at what you have brought on you! At this day surely there is a special need of this warning; for this is a day when nothing is not pried into, nothing is not published, nothing is not laid before all men. *Newman.*

**6. Good for food, delight to the eyes, to be desired to make one wise.** The threefold appeal of the tempter to the infirmities of our nature may be traced also in the temptation of Christ, the second Adam, who "was in all points likewise tempted, but *without* SIN." P. S.——There is a noteworthy parallelism between the Temptation which Christ surmounted in the desert and this under which our first parents succumbed in the garden. "When the woman saw" ("through false spectacles of Satan's making," as Jackson adds) "that the tree was good for food" (the solicitation of the flesh), "and that it was pleasant to the eyes" (the solicitation of the world), "and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (the solicitation of the devil), "she took of the fruit thereof and did eat." In that first sin were the lineaments of every other sin, as in Christ's victory over temptation the lineaments, and very much more than the lineaments, of every other victory. *Trench*

Of the three reasons assigned for eating, each one centres on self, and not one refers, even remotely, to the divine command, and in each of them is there a striking resemblance to the reasons by which men to-day seek to legitimate sin. Thus, the tree was "Good for food." Practical unbelief makes food an ultimate necessity, and connects life with the natural appetite instead of with God through the natural appetite. We must have bread, say these; and what brings us bread is thereby justified. "Pleasant to the eyes." "Beauty for beauty's sake," cry the æsthetes, and very impatiently do they resent all moral tests, owning allegiance to an

artistic standard alone. Yet beauty cannot rival duty. The word of God must regulate art as it regulates our bread. Immoral beauty is sin, however beautiful it be : and the beauty cannot hide the sin or shield the sinner. "To be desired to make one wise." As in Eve's case, knowledge is often the loss of power ; for, while Eve knew good and evil, it was at the cost of her life. She knew evil by becoming evil. So knowledge is not always a blessing. Its value depends on its source. If it is from God, it is power ; if from Satan, it is moral impotence and ruin. He is not best that knows most, but he that knows most from God. . . . Here is the genesis of human sin : Doubt, Unbelief, Gratification—each the step to the next. There could have been no gratification without unbelief, and no unbelief without doubt. *Bryan.*

*Doubt* is awakened whether what God has commanded is really good, and along with this the command itself is exaggerated. Distrust of God was called up, as if He were an envious being who sought to keep man back in a lower stage ; and then *ver.* 4 proceeds to a decided denial of God's word. Only then, when *selfishness*, rebelling against God's will and God's word, has been awakened, does sensuous allurement, *ver.* 6, exert its power. In other words, the real principle of sin is, according to the Old Testament, *unbelief of the divine word, the selfish elevation of self-will above the divine will, and the presumptuous trampling upon the limits set by divine command.* The *senses* appear as occupying only a secondary place in the production of sin. Thus Gen. 3 disproves the doctrine so often advanced, especially in the Rabbinical theology, that according to the Old Testament the real principle of evil lies in matter, in the body. It is a *fundamental doctrine of the Old Testament* that evil is originally the denial of the divine will ; that sin is sin because man selfishly exalts himself above God and His will. The Old Testament knows of no evil which is merely men's wronging of each other, or a mere retardation of the development of human nature, simple weakness. O.

As regards the origin of sin we are not aware that all the philosophic discussions of the world together ever advanced beyond the condensed and inimitable formula of the apostle James : "God cannot be tempted with evil ; neither tempteth he any man ; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin ; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Sin originated in no compulsion, no inducement, on the part of God. It is not an accident, or effect of matter. It had its origin in the free-will of man. Involuntary suggestion, the thought, the imagination of the act interdicted, was not sin ; but the entertainment of that imagination, the cherishing of that desire, the accomplishing of that thought —this is sin. Such is the sequence in this actual history. She *looked*—she saw that the fruit was pleasant to the eye, and good for food ; desire was enkindled, was cherished : and this, when it conceived, brought forth sin ; and sin, when completed in act, brought forth death. All the metaphysics of centuries, whole libraries of discussion, concerning the origin and nature of sin, condensed together, add nothing to this concise statement of historic events. *W. Adams.*

God does not subject us to temptation, that, through sinning, we may illustrate his grace. Trials as tests of our choice of good or evil, of our faith in himself, of our love and devotion, he does appoint for our moral discipline and culture ; but temptations that look toward sin and lead to sin, are the prompting of our own desires, when these are loosed from the control of reason and conscience. The sin does not lie in the fact of temptation, nor in the susceptibility to temptation : but when we suffer our susceptibilities to natural good to be wrought upon to such a degree that they entice us to forget reason, conscience, duty to God ; when these over-stimulated desires come to a head in the decision of the will to gratify them,—then do they bring forth sin. The counteractive to such temptation is a just conception of our highest good as in God, and from him ; a patient, prayerful, unwavering trust in him ; and the keeping his word in our hearts as our law and guide. J. P. T.

Our own experience has made us familiar with the genesis and progress of sin : *we* have fallen a thousand times before the very craft, the very device, by which our first parents were ensnared. The desires and lusts which haunt the senses, and the understanding which holds by sense, demand an excessive unlawful gratification. At first reason and conscience withstand the claim. The repulse only whets desire and makes the craving lust more vehement. They return to the attack. If again withstood, they return again, perhaps under some new disguise, always with new force ; till at last the resistance of reason and conscience is overcome, and some pretext is found for yielding to the clamorous desire. *We* have been "drawn aside of lust, and enticed ;" in *us* "lust has conceived, and brought forth sin." The edge and strict-

ness of our scruples have been worn down ; the force of high spiritual resolves has been frittered away ; the charm of things pleasant to the eye, though not good for food, has grown upon us till we have "*consented* to sin." We know that every time we yield to temptation we become an easier prey to the wiles of evil ; that every hour we neglect or postpone a duty we harden into a more habitual neglect. *Do* we know it? Let us then listen to the warning : "Take heed lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of his sin ;" "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that are in Christ." *Cox.*

The Biblical narrative depicts the sin of our first parents as the result of a temptation which came upon man, and was the cause of his fall, thus intimating the existence of a seducing spiritual power external to man—a view subsequently attaining a more developed doctrinal form, and made of prominent importance in the New Testament. Against no other doctrine, however, is modern consciousness more prejudiced than this. And yet it is the interest of mankind to regard man as tempted, and not as the inventor and first author of sin. Man is not in harmony with sin : he is not Satanic. If he were so, if he had been the originator of sin, he would be incapable of redemption. Sin has not so much proceeded from him as entered into him – a fact which, while it does not extenuate his guilt, alleviates its consequences. *Luthardt.*——If the sin of the human race rests on a free act of its first parents, that could not be the first cause of it. It must have some other ground. If the thought of breaking loose from God had arisen *in their own minds*, they would have set themselves against God in their own deep selfishness ; evil would not be something foreign to man ; man would be evil himself ; he would have *satanized* himself. Just because man is not a devil, must there be a devil. Evil in its human form, where it leaves room for redemption, is to be explained only by temptation. Thus the two ideas at which the natural mind most readily stumbles, the ideas of hereditary sin and of the devil, are manifestly the saviours of the true dignity of man.

As the origin of evil in man can only be explained as Genesis does it, by a free act which establishes his guilt and by temptation which makes redemption a possibility, so the Mosaic narrative describes its nature in a way which is self-evidently true. The *first* act is, that the tempter seeks to loosen the bands of *childlike trust* which bound man to God by casting suspicion on the eternal love ; that he sows first unbelief and then disobedience in the heart of man. To the first suggestion, which does not at once succeed, the tempter gives weight by a second. He drops into their minds the poison of self-exaltation, by asserting that they would rise from their position of dependence and become as God, knowing good and evil. In denying the threatening of death Satan cunningly weaves together truth and falsehood. It is truly the will of God and our destiny, created as we are in the image of God, that we shall become like God. But man has to pass through a course of development under the hand of God to reach this end. Only as a reward for a life of willing subjection and active obedience to God can the free creature receive the crown of eternal life. But the tempter says : "You need only to act and to know yourselves, to live according to your own will ; then are ye as God." He perverts the fact of being in the image of God into the deification of self, and pushes the idea of the creature and of obligation aside. *Self-seeking*, which, putting God aside, makes God of self and makes self the centre of all things, is the *second* element in the nature of sin. A *third* makes its appearance in Eve herself. This is *desire, love of the world, gratification of the senses.* The testing command had this meaning. The tree had no importance in itself. It was of account merely as a means of exercising freedom. This its name tells us. Now, however, this forbidden tree acquires a greater charm than all the unforbidden ones. God has lost reality in her mind and the tree seems to the senses so sweet. The senses obtain the mastery and sin is committed. The flesh has obtained the victory, the true order of life is inverted. All the higher powers have forsaken God, their true ground and rest, the lower powers become dominant. That these three parts of the idea of sin substantially express and exhaust it, is shown not only in the fact that all sin that comes before us in life may be referred to them, but also in the fact that they correspond to the three fundamental elements of man's consciousness, God - consciousness, self - consciousness, and world-consciousness. These have all become corrupted and perverted. They have become respectively alienation from God, selfishness, love of the world. Man has become physical and fleshly. Unbelief is the negative, the union of self-seeking and the lust of the senses the positive element in the idea of sin. Man no longer wishes for God ; he is bent on having the creature in both ways—the mental and natural, the subjective and objective ; he will have

his own self and the world too. According to Genesis, the selfishness is the soul, sensuousness the body of sin. The first is the deep, invisible root, the second the external manifestation The self, separated from God, seeks in the world the elements on which it lives. Redemption opposes faith to unbelief, love to selfishness, the hope of a new world to the lust of this world *Auberlen.*

Angelic spirits, having been brought into being without dependence upon each other, were placed each for himself upon independent, personal probation, and each stood or fell by his own personal obedience ; but we, having been brought into the world by a necessary connection with each other, were put upon trial in the first of our species, who just as effectually evinced what human nature would do as though that nature had been tested in all its possessors. *Thornwell.*

God might have created a universe ruled from first to last by physical law, and so incapable of deviation from the true rule of its action. In such a universe moral evil would have found no place, only because there would have been no creatures properly capable of moral good. Our experience tells us that God has not chosen to stint down His creative activity to these proportions , that we are free agents is not more a matter of faith than experience. We know that God has created beings whose high privilege it is to be able freely to choose Him as their King, as the accepted Master of their whole inward life. But if this privilege is to be real, it also carries with it the implied power of rejecting Him. The alternative risk is the inevitable condition of the consummate honor ; it is actually a substantial part of the honor. A moral being must at least have a capacity for disobedience if he is to be able freely to obey. H. P. L. ——There is no morality or immorality where there is no choice or freedom : consequently were the actions of men under an absolute control, they would no more be answerable for their doings than a clock is for its motions : and therefore to call on God to make all things work by immediate interposition of His power, for the present reward of virtue and punishment of vice, is a request not consistent with itself ; it is desiring God to do that for the sake of virtue, which would destroy virtue and leave no room for the exercise of it, no ground on which to distinguish it from vice and iniquity. *Sherlock.*

Having placed him in a state of probation, surrounded by motives of which some induced to obedience and some to disobedience, but with perfect liberty of choice, an easy duty was enjoined, and the penalty of transgression laid before him His Maker set life and death before him, and left it to his own unforced volition which to choose. Had Omnipotence interposed in these circumstances and exercised a supernatural influence upon man's freedom of will to prevent his sin, He had thereby destroyed the foundation of all the merit of obedience, and put it out of His power to make any trial of him at all. It would have been to govern him not as a *free*, but as a *necessary* agent, and any reward for his conduct would in that case have been as absurd as to reward the sun for shining, or the rivers for running into the ocean. Man therefore fell not by any inevitable necessity, but by the abuse of his free agency.; and to say that God did not interpose to prevent it, is merely to say that he did not see fit to do violence to the moral nature of the being he formed, but left it to be influenced according to the laws to which he had made it subject. *Bush.*

In neglecting the tree of life which he was allowed to eat of, and eating of the tree of knowledge which was forbidden, he plainly showed a contempt of the favors God had bestowed on him, and a preference given to those God did not see fit for him. He would be both his own carver and his own master ; would *have* what he pleased, and *do* what he pleased : his sin was, in one word, *disobedience ;* disobedience to a plain, easy, and express command, which he knew to be a command of trial. He sins against great knowledge, against many mercies, against light and love, the clearest light and the dearest love that ever sinner sinned against. He had no corrupt nature within him to betray him ; but had a freedom of will, not enslaved, and was in his full strength, not weakened or impaired. H.——The temptation assails him to be as God, *i.e.*, independent—his own master. In this consists, according to the Scripture narrative, the essence, the real character of the first sin, the origin of all after sin of mankind. The desire to eat of the forbidden fruit follows on the inward alienation from God ; and so, while the sin was in its real character and origin so great and fearful, its outward form, the act of eating of the forbidden fruit, has the character of a childlike disobedience—in accordance with man's condition—though even then we must not attempt to extenuate the nature of the sin. The *form* which man's sin assumes—nay, every object of the inward evil desire—is always belonging to the *flesh* or the *world ;* but its *soul*, even in its coarsest form of sensuality, is always—*self-exaltation. Gerl.*

The fact of original sin presents nothing strange, nothing obscure ; it consists essentially in disobedience to the will of God, which will is the moral law of man. This disobedience, the sin of Adam, is an act committed everywhere and every day, arising from the same causes, marked by the same characters, and attended by the same consequences as the Christian dogma assigns to it. At the present day, as in the Garden of Eden, this act is occasioned by a thirst for absolute independence, the ambitious aspirings of curiosity and pride, or weakness in the face of temptation. *Guizot.*

I believe, that God created man in his own image, in a reasonable soul, in innocency, in free-will, and in sovereignty ; that he gave him a law and commandment which was in his power to keep, but he kept it not ; that man made a total defection from God, presuming to imagine that the commandments and prohibitions of God were not the rules of good and evil, but that good and evil had their own principles and beginnings, and lusted after the knowledge of those imagined beginnings ; to the end to depend no more upon God's will revealed, but upon himself and his own light, as a god ; than the which there could not be a sin more opposite to the whole law of God : that yet, nevertheless, this great sin was not originally moved by the malice of man, but was insinuated by the suggestion and instigation of the devil, who was the first defected creature, and fell of malice and not by temptation. *Bacon.*

**She took, and did eat ; and gave unto her husband, and he did eat.** Man's first probation *terminated disastrously.* That tree which, because of the divine interdict, had been avoided—which had been the test of obedience—through the subtleties of diabolic solicitation, was approached, and the fruit thereof was eaten. The tempter was believed more than God. The desire of self-control, distrust and independence of the Creator, and palpable infringement of his well-known will, were the ripened form and spirit of sin. The bright and happy auspices of the first probation availed nothing ; and, notwithstanding circumstances most propitious in aid of obedience, sin entered the world, with all its entailment of woe ! *W. Adams.*

The one act was a violation of the whole law (James 2 : 10),—a rejection of the authority of God ; and their conduct, instead of being less culpable owing to the unimportance of the special act prohibited, as rationalists would represent, was on that very account only the more aggravated. It reduced the actual transgressors, and, as the subsequent history proves, all their posterity, into the condition of sinners. Sin is not here mentioned by name, but taking it according to the Scriptural definition as "the transgression of the law," it certainly appears in a form which justifies the Pauline statement : "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5 : 12). The confidence which the parents of mankind had previously reposed in God and the mutual love which they cherished, all at once gave way to distrust, and to recriminations of God and of one another. Shame, fear of God, and mutual estrangement were the feelings which predominated immediately after their transgression, and these plainly declared that they had incurred the penalty against which they had been warned. They were fully conscious that they had forfeited God's favor, in which is life (Ps. 30 : 5), and had become obnoxious to his displeasure—a state which Scripture designates as "death." D. M.

**The eyes of both were opened.** Both morally and physically they saw before. Morally they saw truth in all its beauty ; physically, they saw Eden in all its glory. But they saw now what they never expected to see, and felt what they never expected to feel. They have now the experimental knowledge of good and evil. They felt the remorse which succeeds ever the consciousness of sin. They are bereaved of the comfortable presence of their Maker. The eyes of their mind are opened to the consequences of sin. It is the brief and beautiful expression for that which, in all ages since, to every son of Adam, occurs in one or other degree after a fearful transgression. The fascination of crime loses its spell of enchantment over the soul as soon as the crime is committed, and the terrible experience of millions is herein truly uttered : "Their eyes were opened." The peculiar law of the human soul has furnished the theme in chief for tragedy in every age. S. R ——It did not make them know good and evil altogether, as God knows it, but in an experimental sense, as the devil knows it. In point of knowledge, they became like God ; in point of morality, like the tempter. M.——The trial and decision of man, but not his fall and rebellion, were necessary. As the tempter had deceitfully promised, man's eyes were opened ; but he only saw his nakedness. He knew what was good, but by the dreadful consciousness of having lost it ; he knew what was evil, but in painful experience of the wretchedness which now had become his.

He became as God , from having been his representative, he had assumed an independent position. He had constituted himself a god, he had become his own master ; but this likeness to God made him exceedingly wretched and poor, instead of rendering him happy. By yielding to the will of the tempter, and rebelling against that of God, man became subject to *sin* and to *death*, which is the wages of sin. K.

Individual life is an analogue of the dispensation which rules the history of the race. There are crises in the history of each of us—points at which a determinate direction is given to the character, whether intellectual or moral. The will stands face to face with some great question of duty ; we debate it ; we meditate ; there is an earnest and bitter conflict—an agony ; the issue gives a tremendous impulse one way or the other ! This is pre-eminently the case with religion. The law stands face to face with us ; the Spirit stimulates conscience ; we struggle ; we resist ; we evade ; matters are finally brought to a *crisis*—we must decide, and often that decision is final ! Oh, the importance of having every decision right ! *Thornwell.*

Pride whispers that by treading the path of sin we shall climb to the most desirable heights ; sensuality discovers the beautiful in all forbidden fruit ; we forget everything except the claim of lust, and, like our first parents, we give to each other the apple of death. But erelong we, like them, have the bandage torn from our eyes, and it appears what bitter truth the tempter spoke in the misleading declaration : " In the day when ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened." Alas, what a fearful difference between the light in which the sin appears an hour after and a day before it was committed ! *Van. O.*——Worldly fathers and despairing mothers take what comfort they can from the easy maxim that young people had better have a free range through scenes of temptation, in order that its attractions may not take them by surprise further on, and that they must " see life," to know how to live. If we could lead out in our time the hopeless profligates of a single generation which that plausible philosophy has betrayed, the joyous households, once pure, that it has wrecked and distracted, the sweet, clean hearts it has defiled, the noble natures it has degraded, the men whose honor it has ruined, and the women whose peace it has crushed,—a very long, a very mournful, and a very admonitory procession it would be. At the head of it move the first human pair, marching in miserable humiliation out of Eden. The tree of the knowledge of " good " was not enough. There hung, in ruddy beauty, the more luscious fruit of the knowledge of " evil " as well. Why not eat of that ? Knowledge can do no harm. Seeing things as they are ! Nature is a safe study. " Thou shalt *not* surely die." Six thousand years the story has been told over and over. You need not go for it to the beginning of Genesis. It was acted last night close to where you live,—happy for you if not by some soul that you love. Indiscriminate knowledge, unhallowed curiosity, the lust of the mind looking through eager eyes, is the unceasing temptation of man. So he falls first into sin, then into shame. " Seeing life" turns out to be tasting of death. F. D. H.

**They saw that they were naked.** This, of course, is to be taken in a spiritual sense, for, in anything short of a high typical sense this was not now first true. This is no allegorical sense put upon the words here to serve a purpose ; it is the interpretation which accords with the usage of Scripture elsewhere. Thus " Moses saw that by erecting the golden calf Aaron had made the people *naked.*" So Ahaz, by his sinful course, " made Judah *naked*"—that is, exposed to the wrath of God. S. R.——Then did they feel with what grace they were clothed when, though naked, they were the slaves of no unseemly desires. In their hastening to make an apron of fig-leaves, they appear to have been moved by some mysterious impulse, and to have adopted unwittingly this sign of their punishment—a conviction of sinfulness to themselves. *Aug.*

As the language in ch. 2 : 25 is an expression of purity and peace of mind, so the language used here is the expression of conscious guilt, of self-condemnation and shame. It was the trangression of the divine command that wrought the change. As obedience was the conscious recognition of the divine authority, and the condition of continued connection with the source of spiritual life and peace, so their disobedience was the conscious rejection of that authority, and forfeiture of spiritual life and enjoyment. Man's natural reason, with his appetites and passions, was now in the ascendant ; no longer under the control and direction of that spiritual element of his nature, in which he bore the image of God, and lived in happy communion with him. Hence his dread of God, and conscious guilt and shame. T. J. C.—— There was no blush in Eden, as there was none in heaven, till sin entered it. That crimson signal of guilt, or offended modesty, betrays the knowledge between good and evil which was first born on earth when transgression invaded

Eden. No reproof, no upbraiding, no sentence, as yet had been uttered by their Maker ; but the guilty pair had lost, what they never could regain, ignorance of evil, consciousness of innocence, and they were **ashamed.** Shame is the first-born progeny of sin.

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We may not explain the *nature of the transmitted influence* which connects our sin with the sin of Adam. It would be of little use to speculate where we cannot know. We sin, and we are accountable for our own sins. To deny the fact that we sin, that all men sin, that all the human race are deficient in the judgment of the law which requires supreme love to God and disinterested love for our fellows, is to forswear the testimony of facts, the whole drift of history, and the positive affirmations of the inspired Word. Yet dimmed and blighted as they are by the consequences of sin, the original faculties of our nature are not destroyed. United to a life which is endless—brought into play in connection with immortality—they make man a being still, little short of divine, in whose presence we are awed—and the moment we suffer ourselves to think lightly or meanly of man's capacities we lose the last hope of his restoration. The highest proof of man's greatness and worth, is in what God has done for his recovery. The Scriptures exalt man's *being* beyond all which man himself ever conceived ; and this always in connection with his moral apostasy. Scriptural assertion and palpable fact are agreed. Man has intelligence, capacity, conscience, and freedom ; but he has *not* obedience. By what test is obedience to be judged? The revealed Law of God. Another test was prescribed to the first man, even that he should abstain from an interdicted object. The criterion of human character now is this epitome of divine legislation : "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.*" Tried by *this* rule—and not another—the character of man is defective. Man does not love his maker with all his heart, nor his neighbor as himself. It is a libel on humanity and the perversion of a truth, to affirm that men are as utterly bad as they might be ; for besides restraints, social and providential, there are laws, many of which man has himself enacted, the shadows of a greater statute, to which he may be conformed in the practice of all which is generous, honest, and humane ; but the testimony of history and Scripture is, that by that divine law which demands the supreme love of the soul to God, the character of the human race is defective. Noble specimens there have been of humanity, especially as redeemed and helped by Christianity ; but where and when has there been one, out of all the race, who, in an honest judgment, has obeyed the perfect law of his Maker, without the deflection of a thought or the defect of a moment?

Change man's *circumstances* as you will—give him a Christian parentage—place before him a godly example—here is something which may be affirmed of the whole species ; they do not fulfil the law which demands perfect and supreme love to God and man. The first probation of human nature, on principles of obedience, terminated disastrously ; and tried on the same terms, our common nature has been found defective and depraved ever since.

The circumstances of man's condition correspond somewhat to his character. All sin is not to be ascribed to a vitiated bodily constitution ; but the human body is subject to strong and ill-regulated appetences—to pain, disease, and death. Fast as the redemptive help is applied to the world, man's physical condition improves ; but it were nothing but delusion to affirm that his condition now is what it would have been if sin had not shadowed the earth. It was not misanthropy, but inspired truth, which affirmed that man was born to trouble as sparks fly upward. Innumerable compensations, mitigations, and mercies remain, but every man who is born into this world comes in contact with evils which do not belong to a state of sinless innocence. Sufferings and sorrows, not to speak of wrongs, oppressions, and wars, remind us that we live in a world on which rests the curse of sin, and which is filled with the penalties of transgression. *W. Adams.*

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The creation of the first human pair was the creation of a race. In God's eternal thought, which Augustine calls the divine idea, or the primal type, the genus precedes the individual. Or, as Edwards puts it, taking the figure from Stapfer, Adam was the root and humanity the tree ; so that the sin of Adam was the fall of man. Or, as Paul has it, "by one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners." And this is the proper beginning of human history. It begins in sin. Sin in the root carries sin into all the branches ; not, indeed, as a necessity of fate, else it could be no longer sin, but yet as a perfect certainty of history. As is the root, so are the branches ; as in the oak, so in the man. In the man a mystery · but so also in the oak. A mystery, because a life. Only in man the mystery is deeper, because the life is deeper.

Choice there must be, to have it sin ; but the choice is beyond and beneath our scrutiny. Adam *fell* into sin ; we are *born* to it. We choose it, indeed ; but it is our first choice. But now, besides sin, we have grace also in the problem. Both are inexplicable. Sin is a mystery, which human speculation has never fathomed. Grace is a mystery, into which the angels desire to look. What relief we need, in our perplexed and painful meditations upon human life, may be had by putting the two together, face to face. R. D. H.

The lessons of Scripture, while leaving the entrance of evil in its awful mystery, assist our faith by showing first that nothing derogatory to God could be implied in its introduction, and then that God dealing with it as a fact has overruled it for his own glory. The shadow which the entrance of evil casts on God redemption rolls away. It was not for want of power in God that sin entered, for in Christ he defeats it. It was not for want of righteousness, for redemption is one continued death-blow to sin's dominion. It was not for want of wisdom, for the wisdom that cures is higher than the wisdom that was required to prevent. It was not for want of love, for the love that provided the second Adam to humanity could not have been wanting in the trial of the first. There is thus a reply on Calvary to the vexing thoughts that cluster around Eden, and while the mystery remains it loses its terror. And further, the undoubted outburst of the glory of God on the darkened theatre of sin, though we dare not say that the theatre was darkened *for the purpose*, assists our faith in God. It has been conclusively shown that evil can be overruled for good, that attributes of God are brought out that might otherwise have slumbered, and emotions called forth in his creatures which without danger and deliverance would have been impossible. Where sin abounded grace has much more abounded. God has become more glorious in his dealings with sin for its expulsion ; saved sinners more blessed, angels more instructed and confirmed. *Cairns.*

As the fall of man, through the marvellous plan of redemption, has brought greater good to man and higher glory to God, so has it also given to our human melodies greater depth and compass, that we may fitly sing and celebrate this noble triumph. Then was introduced that solemn but sweet *minor* which unlocks the fountain of tears, and which has carried so much of contrite prayer upward to heaven, till, like that weeping mist that went up to water Eden, it descends again in soft and fertilizing dews. *Ker.*

## Section 25.

### INQUIRY, CONFESSION, JUDGMENT, MERCY.

GENESIS 3 : 8–19.

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day :
and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the
9 trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art
10 thou ? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked ;
11 and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked ? Hast thou eaten of the
12 tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat ? And the man said, The woman
13 whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God
said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done ? And the woman said, The serpent be-
14 guiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done
this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; upon thy belly shalt
15 thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life : and I will put enmity between thee
and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt
16 bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy concep-
tion ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and
17 he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice
of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat
of it : cursed is the ground for thy sake ; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ;

18 thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field :
19 in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

God was not alienated from man when man was alienated from him. The life of humanity was not ended, at once and forever, by the disastrous issue of its first probation. From all which is told us in revelation, we infer that when the fallen angels sinned retribution followed immediately upon transgression. For them was no reprieve, no redemption, no gospel of forgiveness. Mark the difference. When man sinned, though retribution of one kind followed, yet man was spared. The curtain did not drop before this stage of being, nor the life of man go out in darkness. The waves of oblivion did not roll over the world, nor was a new creation evoked to supply its place ; but the world continued, the sun shone, the stars kept on in their courses, time waited, and man was placed on a new and different probation. That second probation forms the great body of human history. The first was a mere prelude to the second. This explains why it is that the narrative of the first is so brief and condensed. It is not pertinent or practical to ourselves at all. We are not deciding our destiny on the same probationary terms which were prescribed to man at the beginning. Our immortal blessedness is not pivoted on the contingency of sinless obedience and unsullied innocence. Mercy presides over the second and main probation of our race ; and our destiny turns on our relations and dispositions to the means of redemption. A glimpse of coming hope and relief breaks through the gloom of the curse itself. Promise is mingled with the very utterance of displeasure ; nor does the cloud which gathered its blackness, and uttered its thunders over the heads of the guilty, discharge its contents, before the bow of hope is painted on its gloom, to gladden their tearful eyes and desponding hearts ; nor have they stepped outside the gates of Eden, before the second probation of human nature begins, under the auspices of restorative help. *W. Adams.*

At the very beginning, *under a system of natural religion, Adam was constituted the head and organ of a religious Commonwealth.* God entered into a covenant with him, distinctly religious in its character, and which proposed for its end his promotion to the highest spiritual felicity. The tree of knowledge, as the test of man's obedience, was the appointed symbol of God's moral government ; whilst the mysterious tree of life was the seal of all the blessings which should accrue from a successful probation. In the institution of the Sabbath a more distinct claim was laid upon the homage and worship of the creature. In the language of Lord Bacon, "Man was thus designated as the interpreter and high priest of nature, to gather up its mute praises, to fill them with his own intellect and soul, and to pour the universal song into the ear of Him, whose glory was reflected in them all." By the force of his position, as the root and representative of all his offspring, he was constituted the prophet, priest, and king of that religious empire. From its origin, the Family, in its idea as it stood before the mind of Jehovah, was THE CHURCH, the temple of his worship.

*Equally so after the fall, the first man becomes, in the Family, the minister of the religion of grace.* Brief as the history is, it is full of broad suggestions as to the churchly character of the household. Look at the first promise, the seedling in which is implicitly contained the whole of our theology. In its very terms, "the seed of the woman," it postulates the parent and the Family ; and that Family, as embracing the ark, with its mercy-seat and the covering rainbow. Definitely as it points through the ages to Him who should be born of the Virgin, it could be fulfilled, both as a promise and a prophecy, only through the Family, bound together by natural ties, until the fulness of the times. *B. M. Palmer.*

We find in the Bible a unity of *promise* concerning the Redemption of man. It was a striking and almost an exceptional feature in Christ as a Teacher, that He did not profess to introduce a new and original system of truth, but came to complete a foregoing Revelation and to finish an appointed work. He confirmed his own doctrine by appealing to Moses and the prophets ; and the constant argument of the apostles in their early preaching was that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled, in his person, all the conditions of ancient prophecy and promise. Going back upon this line of promise to the later prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures, we find in Malachi and Zechariah, the announcement of the coming Purifier, the Deliverer, the Shepherd, the King, the Redeemer, with various marks of identity, all which were verified in Christ. A century earlier, in Daniel, then afar off at the court of Babylon, we find predictions of the Messiah as a Redeemer, with specifica-

tions touching His character and work which were marvellously filled out in Christ. Yet again two centuries further back, in the prophet Isaiah, we find the most detailed delineation of the Messiah to come as the Child of Hope, as the Comforter of His people, as the suffering Redeemer, as the Prince of Peace. Once more ; in the height of the kingdom of Israel, when David had brought the tribes to be united at home and respected abroad, we find in his prophetic Psalms the announcement of a Son before whom he bowed as his Lord, of whom he predicted an everlasting kingdom and victory over death. Then following back the course of ages to Moses, to Jacob, to Abraham, and across the flood up to the very gate of Eden, we find fewer and dimmer, but still legible and unmistakable, the promises of the great Prophet and Lawgiver like unto Moses, of the Shiloh, the Prince of Peace who shall gather the peoples to Himself, of the Seed of Abraham in whom all nations shall be blessed, of the Seed of the woman which shall bruise the serpent's head.

When we consider the vast intervals of time by which these prophecies are separated one from another, the great variety of circumstances, places and conditions in which they were uttered ; in the infancy of the race, and at the moment when sin and death seemed to have destroyed all hope for mankind ; in the homeless wanderings of solitary men like Abraham and Jacob, who had nothing to build upon but faith ; in the wild encampment of a horde of fugitives just escaped from serfdom into the desert ; from the throne of a consolidated kingdom, renowned in arms, favored in foreign alliance, and glorious with the tokens of Jehovah's presence ; amid the dismembered fragments of that same kingdom, and in the exile of the people of God, who sitting by the rivers of Babylon, for very grief could not sing the songs of Zion to their mocking captors ; under a foreign rule, and in times of religious decline and social corruption that seemed to render hopeless the idea of reviving and deliverance ; when we thus follow through so many and so distant steps, so many and so contrary conditions, these fragmentary prophecies, and find them ever adhering to one type and following one line of development, and pointing to one perfect and glorious consummation, there is nothing in all that science has discovered of the permanence of types, and the unity of plan, and the development of system in the natural world, that can exceed in impression this proof, from the unity of the promise of Redemption, of the finger of God inditing and unfolding the whole. J. P. T.

**8. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.** The sound of the Majestic Presence, or the glory of the Lord, approaching nearer and nearer to the place where they were. *Patrick.*——The Scripture narrates these things in such wise that we should rather believe that God spake to man in Paradise in the same way as He afterward spake to the Fathers, to Abraham, to Moses, that is, in some bodily form or appearance. Hence is it also that they *heard His Voice, as He walked in Paradise at eventide, and hid themselves. Aug.*——God held converse with the first men in a visible form, as a Father and Educator of His children, and this was the original mode of the Divine revelation, not coming in for the first time after the fall. *Keil.*——The Targums here and generally paraphrase the Name of the Most High by "the Word of the LORD," more especially in those passages where is recorded anything like a visible or sensible representation of his Majesty. The Christian Fathers almost universally believed that every appearance of God to the patriarchs and prophets was a manifestation of the Eternal Son. E. H. B.

**Hid themselves.** Repulsion from God was the necessary effect of guilt and shame. Man sought to conceal himself from his Maker. An evil conscience invariably begets dislike and dread of God. W. A.——As a child hides himself from a father he has offended, so hid they from him. It was a "voice" they heard. It is clear that the tones of that voice had been of kindness and love. There is no reason to suppose that now that voice was less kind than it had been, for the Lord had not chosen to appear to know their crime but from their own acknowledgment. It was the consciousness of sin that made all the difference—that made the Presence most terrible that had hitherto been hailed with reverent joy and filial confidence. Sin did in them, as it does in all their descendants, create a cold and cheerless distance between the heart and God. *Kit.*

The tones of that voice had till now been the sweetest to their ear of all the sounds and harmonies of Eden. For, doubtless, he appeared to Adam just as subsequently he oft assumed the shadowy form of humanity to visit Abram or Moses or Joshua. But the consciousness of sin turns all this into an image of horror and dread, while, as yet, no hope of a recovery assures them. And, therefore, they fly into the darkest recesses, in the vain hope of eluding His all-seeing eye. It is this aversion to any real consciousness of God's presence that forms

the most insuperable barrier to the salvation of the sinner. Under this fear from a consciousness of sin, he will not allow the voice of the Lord God to come near, that it may bring him with the sentence of condemnation also the hope of recovery. Here is the secret and the source of the atheism and unbelief of which Christian lands are so full—here is the reason why atheism and unbelief are the products of Christian lands chiefly. The superior moral tone which the gospel infuses into society brings home to men the consequences of their guilt; and the voice of the Lord God in his perpetual ordinances keeps ever alive their fears, so, to avoid it, they encase themselves in unbelief. Only when the soul is brought "to look upon Him pierced," shall it truly mourn for sin. Under the mere sense of guilt, without hope of pardon, the attempt will always be to screen the soul, not only from the voice of God direct, but from that voice of God also which speaks within through the conscience. S. R.

Not that men can hide themselves from God, but Adam and those that are his by nature will seek to do it, because they do not know him aright. These words therefore show us what a bitter thing sin is to the soul; it is only for hiding-work, sometimes under its fig-leaves, sometimes among the trees of the garden. Oh, what a shaking, starting, timorous conscience is a sinful, guilty conscience! *Bunyan.*

There is that in the very nature of sin which tends to self-disclosure. Sin runs to passion; passion runs to tumult in character; and a tumultuous character tends to reveal itself, so that the world shall see it in its ultimate and finished hideousness. The fear of this is often discoverable in the experience of the guilty, as a distinct element of retributive suffering. It is distinct from the secret consciousness of sin; distinct, also, from any well-defined fear of its consequences. Our souls are so made as to tremble at the thought of *detection* in itself considered. Such was the working of conscience upon the first guilty pair in Paradise. With a simplicity which could have accompanied none but a first sin, they sought to hide themselves from God We do not know that anything else than sin would ever have awakened in the human mind that instinct of concealment. It is an instinct that shuts a sinner into the society of his own outraged conscience. He must bear the torture of an invisible Nemesis, alone. This often goads him with the simple dread of detection, till in desperation he goes and forestalls it by confession, to rid himself of the torment of anticipating it. The history of human justice abounds with instances of this working of the Law of Conscience. Yet the germ of just such self-disclosure is in every human heart. *A. Phelps.*

The soul's fine mechanism is strangely disordered. The original end of its creation is lost. We learn the nature of its structure by the extent and melancholy grandeur of its ruins. The powers that allied it to angels are now known principally by the terror of their movement. Account for the fact as we may, its existence is beyond contradiction. Whatever be our connection with the original apostasy, whatever the nature of the influence that has come down from Adam, be the preponderance of evil on the side of the first transgression, or of the actual personal offence, the fact admits of no qualification or denial. The proofs crowd upon us unceasingly and in broad daylight. They are within us and about us. The consciousness of every moment has a tongue, every wind of heaven has its sad voices. History, with its unbroken chapters of blood and crime, only confirms what we hourly see and every moment feel. *B. B. Edwards.*

**9. The Lord God called unto Adam.** Emphatically called JEHOVAH ELOHIM, God the Lord. By which, in the language of Philo, according to the opinion of all the ancient Fathers, is to be understood GOD the FATHER, speaking by CHRIST, the LOGOS, the WORD, or *Son* of *God:* the *Messenger* and *Representative* of the *Father*, "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person;" who appeared in and spake from the *Shekinah*, or cloud of glory; who communed with Adam, with Noah, with Abraham and the Patriarchs; and communicated His will to and conducted the Israelitish nation. For of God the Father it is expressly said, "No man hath seen Him at any time." "Neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape." *Pyle.*——This may be regarded as the germ of the whole Bible. Man has fallen, and, afraid of God, has hid himself; but God comes to look for him, and hold out the hope of mercy to him. Here is *God seeking after guilty, ruined man.* From Genesis to Revelation we find the same thing—God looking down on man while struggling in the billows of sin and guilt, and stretching out His hand to save him. "In other religions we see man seeking after God; in the Bible we see God seeking after man." W. G. B.

**Where art thou?** Such questions do not argue ignorance in Him that asks them; but are intended to awaken the guilty to a confes-

sion of their crimes. As appears from chap. 4 : 9, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Of whom when Cain stubbornly refused to give an account, the Lord said immediately (to show that He needed not to be informed), "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." *Bp. Patrick.*

**10. I was afraid.** *Shame* and *fear* were the first fruits of sin, and fruits which it has *invariably* produced from the first transgression to the present time. A. C.——Adam's reply is full of evasion. He confesses not his sin, but only his fear and shame at his bodily nakedness. The question just asked had given him opportunity to own his sin and misery. His sense of bodily nakedness is indeed the sad proof of his nakedness of soul, that could not any longer bear the sight of God. And now fear has taken possession of his soul, where all was peace before. *Jacobus.*

**11. Who told thee that thou wast naked?** Adam knew not that this very consciousness betrayed him. A new faculty had come into play. He found a judge within him, of whose presence when all things smiled he had not been conscious. Conscience performed its part ; it made the fallen pair miserable in the consciousness of sin. It filled them with shame and dread. It could do no more ! and this was much. *Kil.*——Genesis gives no theory of creation, no thesis on the essence of *sin*, no theory of its origin ; but it sets forth, in the form of a story, a sin from which each one can easily for himself develop the theory, and the thoughts involved in the narrative—thoughts which are decisive for the whole course of revelation. A definition of *religion* is not given ; but the way in which it came about that man feels a dread of God, is exhibited in a statement of facts. With good reason has Nitzsch called Genesis the doctrinal theology of the law.

After once appearing by the free act of man, sin does not remain in this isolation. The *second* sin, that of self-excuse and palliation of the offence, follows immediately on the first, the sin of disobedience. This is the deceit (Ps. 32 : 2) which, when sin has once entered, prevents the realization of earnest opposition thereto. As sin thus joins to sin, it becomes a *habit*, and in this way a definite feature of the heart, or, as it is termed, an imagination of the heart, an *inclination*, which gives a perverted tendency to man's will. O.

They ate of the tree which was to make them wise, and, alas ! they saw clearly what sin was, what shame, what despair, what death. They lost God's presence, and they gained the knowledge of evil. They lost Eden, and they gained a conscience. This is the knowledge of good and evil. Lost spirits do not know good. Angels do not know evil. Fallen beings, fallen yet not cast away, know good and evil ; evil not external to them, nor yet one with them ; but in them, yet not simply of them. Such was the fruit of the forbidden tree, as it remains in us to this day. *Newman.*

**12, 13.** The next effect of disobedience was MUTUAL RECRIMINATION between the guilty parties. Before, they were as one with themselves, as they were one with God. But now they were at variance. The charge of guilt was thrown from one to the other—by Adam upon Eve, by Eve upon the tempter—and throughout it all there was that pitiable effort which conscious guilt always engenders, to evade the light of truth, and ward off the unequivocal admission of demerit. W. A.

**She gave me.** Instead of confessing his sin, the man immediately throws the weight of it on the woman—nay, through the words, "whom *Thou* gavest me," on God Himself ; just as now sinners try to lay the fault on the temptations of others, and then on the circumstances of life which were ordained by God. *Gerl.*——From the beginning man hath always been apt to lay the blame of his faults where it can least lie, upon goodness and perfection itself. The very first sin that ever man was guilty of he endeavored to throw upon God. And his posterity are still apt to excuse themselves the same way. *Tillotson.*——God gave him the woman, and she gave him the fruit ; so that he seemed to have it but at one remove from God's own hand. There is a strange proneness in those that are tempted, to say that they are tempted of God ; as if our abusing God's gifts would excuse our violation of God's laws. God gives us riches, honors, and relations, that we may serve him cheerfully in the enjoyment of them ; but if we take occasion from them to sin against him, instead of blaming Providence for putting us into such a condition, we must blame ourselves for perverting the gracious designs of Providence therein. H.

The original temptation set before our first parents was that of proving their freedom by using it without regard to the will of Him who gave it. The original excuse offered by them after sinning was that they were not really free, that they had acted under a constraining influence, the subtilty of the tempter. They committed sin that they might be independent of their Maker ; they defended it on the ground that they were dependent upon Him. And this

has been the course of lawless pride and lust ever since ; to lead us, first, to exult in our uncontrollab'e liberty of will and conduct ; then, when we have ruined ourselves, to plead that we are the slaves of necessity. *Newman.*

**13. The serpent beguiled me.** This first act of the devil is that wherein we may behold, "as in a glass," the art he still useth to tempt us to sin, and bring us to utter destruction. *His practice is uniformly to "beguile."* He presents all things fair to our face, and suffers not evil to appear before us in its own deformed shape ; for then every man would fly from it.

**14. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this.** Because he had beguiled the man and woman which God had made, and caused them to transgress his great commandment. He that is the *cause* and *occasion* of another's sin is as hateful to God as the doer, and is liable to a greater punishment. Nay, the serpent's doom is first read to him as if he were the arch-offender : for which same reason the woman's sentence comes next, because she had been a sin-maker. The same might be confirmed from the quality of their several judgments ; in that the serpent alone is doomed to be "cursed," and no such sentence is pronounced either upon the man or upon the woman. *Jos. Mede.*——The most obvious sense of the passage assigns a measure of this curse to the literal serpent—the animal under the guise of whom Satan beguiled his victim. But the responsibility and guilt being upon the very Satan, this curse falls chiefly on him. He is degraded, doomed to eternal shame ; and in his great conflict against God and goodness, to disgrace, defeat and damning ruin. H. C.——The curse pronounced upon the deceiver is plainly addressed to an intelligent agent, designedly guilty of an enormous crime, and would have been unmeaning and unworthy of the Divine character if addressed to a mere animal. That, however, the phraseology of the curse is in its outer sense applied to the condition of the serpent, while in its inner meaning terribly significant to the intelligent agent, seems clearly to show that the serpent was really employed in this awful transaction. The more closely the language of the curse is examined, the more real its purport as addressed to the intelligent agent of the temptation, under forms of speech adapted to the serpentine condition, will be apparent.

**15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.** This could have no significance with reference to the serpent ; but to the real tempter it was of awful importance. It is not likely that the fallen pair understood these words as *he* did. Yet even to them it must have appeared that it promised some great and crowning triumph to "the seed of the woman," perhaps a recovery from the fall, after the enemy had seemed for a time to triumph over him, and to "bruise his heel." But we know its meaning better than either the first pair or even Satan did then. We can see that it was the first gospel promise, foretelling the sufferings of Christ and his final triumph over the evil one—his victory in our behalf, by suffering. *Kit.*——"Her seed,' and "his," give the appearance of a personal conflict and victory. This inference is strengthened by the promise being given to the seed of the *woman.* There has been but one descendant of Eve who had no earthly father, and he "came to destroy the works of the Devil." *Cook.*——This verse has been called "the first gospel." The gospel, to be a genuine gospel, must come in the form of a curse upon sin. Love is the fulfilling of the law ; but hatred of sin is the only portal to true and pure and holy love. *Thy seed* and *her seed* are the children of Satan, and the children of God. *Gibson.*

I believe, that upon the fall of man death and vanity entered by the justice of God, and the image of God in man was defaced ; and heaven and earth, which were made for man's use, were subdued to corruption by his fall ; but then, that instantly and without intermission of time, after the word of God's law became through the fall of man frustrate as to obedience, there succeeded the *greater word of the promise*, that the righteousness of God might be wrought by faith. *Bacon.*

The entire gospel of redemption was in that germinal promise concerning "the seed of the woman." Through all the ages, and in all the divers manners of its communication, it is one and the same Gospel, embodying the same great truth in its various stages of development. S. R.——The recovery of man was announced on the day of his apostasy. But the method of that recovery was a mystery, obscurely hinted at by prophets who knew not what the Spirit that was in them did testify ; more and more pronounced through symbols and the later prophecies ; at length, in the fulness of times, unveiled in the incarnation of Christ ; but still a mystery of the divine love for the ever-unfolding glories of eternity. And all this wondrous plan is referred back to the purpose of God be-

fore the foundation of the world,—ever the same plan in the religion which the Bible reveals ; ever the same purpose in Divine Providence, unfolding and fufilling this plan ; ever the same development in history, as this great purpose of redemption moves onward through the ages toward its consummation in the final accord of the physical and the moral universe, through the triumph of God over evil, of salvation over sin. Surely we who have part in such a redemption, and whose inheritance in this glory is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, should be holy and without blame before Him who hath blessed us with these infinite riches of his grace. J. P. T.

In the light of this first promise we see that though Satan plotted the ruin of the race, God counterplotted the ruin of Satan and the salvation of the masses of mankind. This is the birth-hour of most momentous issues. Sin came in upon Eden and upon earth ; and many a bitter sorrow, many a cup of suffering and woe, must needs follow in its train ; but *Redemption comes in also ;* it enters upon its co-ordinate work to save the soul from sin and from eternal death and to bring in everlasting righteousness. The history of our world in its most vital aspects is foreshadowed here in this first short meeting of their Maker with the sinning pair. The spoken recorded words were few, but their significance was momentous ; the sweep of their bearing, the issues of the divine policy here indicated, were destined to fill up the ages of time with stirring and strange conflict, and to send their influence down through the endless ages of man's being and of God's kingdom. H. C.—"This promise, as it is the first, is also the most indefinite." But, even to their minds, it must have forcibly conveyed the impression that their sin and suffering would certainly be remedied ; that this deliverance would be the result of a struggle in which the seed of the woman would sustain only partial injury ; that their enemy or enemies would sustain final and fatal defeat ; and, perhaps, that this triumph would be achieved by a being who should be, in a peculiar sense, the offspring of the woman. That this promise was of vast importance in the Divine estimation of Him who announced it may be inferred from the circumstance, that no sooner had He convicted man of his guilt than He uttered it, even before He announced the impending penalty. Not only "in the midst of wrath did He remember mercy ;" but by the precedence, in the order of time, which He gave to the promise, MERCY rejoiced against judgment even in this first moment of her advent. It gave man a moral horizon, and kindled in it a star. J. H.

In this brief statement is the germ of all history. Every Messianic prophecy is traceable to it ; and in it are the secrets of human sorrow and Christian joy. In its light we can more easily comprehend the universal social and moral turmoil, the struggles for salvation, the triumphs of holiness, and the certainty of victory when "the *head*" of the serpent is bruised, and the evil principle has become powerless, by which man was seduced to his fall. Its light is the dawn and dayspring of prophecy, showing that "Man was not excluded from Paradise till prophecy had sent him forth with some pledge and hope of consolation." After this twofold sentence of condemnation and of promise, Prophecy appears in two distinct forms, the one prediction in words, and the other prediction in actions ; it often sets forth the same truths, now verbally and now in types. *W. Fraser.*——In the promise to Eve we hear the first utterance of prophecy, and catch the first gleam of that light and hope which was to brighten into the perfect day. Have we not here the great elements which run through the whole Bible—"law and prophecy ; the denunciation of sin and the promise of pardon ; the flame which consumes and the light which comforts ;" and is not this the whole of the covenant? *Farrar.*

The Gospel enfolded in the very curse upon the tempter, is planted among the clods of the wasted paradise to germinate and gradually unfold itself through all the subsequent revelation. The slightest analysis of the ideas contained in these words unfolds to us these great truths : That the Redeemer and Restorer of the race must be man, since he is to be of the seed of the woman ; that he is to be at the same time more than man, since he is to conquer the conqueror of man, and that, too, in a world already a sinful world, which he is to regain ; that the redemption shall involve a new nature, at enmity with the fallen and enslaved nature ; that this redemption is to be accomplished by vicarious suffering, since suffering is involved in the bruising of his heel ; that the new nature shall be a regeneration by the power of Jehovah, for it is not a natural enmity, but "I will put the enmity" between the redeemed man and the children of the devil ; that the redemption shall involve the gathering out of the race a "peculiar people" at enmity with the natural children of the devil ; and that the redemption shall involve the ultimate triumph of the woman's seed in at last bruising the head of and destroying

the tempter. Such is the sentence pronounced, and the promise involved in it, anterior to the passing of the sentence upon man himself. With such a promise of mercy revealed to faith, the sinner might listen without hopeless despair to the curse—Eve to the curse of subjection and multiplied sorrow—Adam to the curse of sorrow in the eating of bread, and the curse of the ground for his sake, and the doom, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," and "dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return." S. R.

He that shall bruise the head of the serpent shall belong, says the Book of Genesis, to the race of Shem, to the posterity of Abraham and Jacob, to the kingdom of Judah. (Gen. 9 : 26 ; 12 : 3 ; 49 : 10.) *Guizot.*——Though this promise was not fulfilled till four thousand years after, yet the benefits commenced from this very time : which was before God had rejected Cain and preferred Seth to him ; and long before any restriction was made to Noah's family, or Shem's, who derived from him ; that all the world might look upon the Messiah, as a common benefit to *all the sons of Adam. Patrick.*——The Incarnation begins to appear, in its preparations and foretokenings, at the very beginning of the Biblical period, as the one central fact and supreme glory of the whole. The Redemption is the theme of the sublime chorus of inspired voices from Genesis to the Apocalypse. As on the Mount of Transfiguration, so in the high seats of Prophecy, Psalm, Sacred History, and typical anticipation, the elders speak of the decease which should be accomplished at Jerusalem. F. D. H.

Jewish prophecy reveals from its very first word its bearing upon mankind as a whole : "*the seed of the woman,*" in the original signifies the whole of humanity. At the call of Abraham the prophetic horizon seems to narrow itself. But it is then that it takes pains to affirm and expressly to declare its universal tendency. "In thy *seed* shall *all the families of the earth* be blessed." The seed of Abraham, that is, the people of Israel, is only the means to an end ; the end itself was "all the families of the earth." And when, at last, prophecy concentrates itself upon that wonderful Person in whom all preceding promises were to find their fulfilment, this is the language in which He is spoken of : "I have given thee *the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*" *Godet.*

The whole human race shall not be the prey of the devil. To the seed of the serpent the Lord opposes the seed of the woman, the great representative of fallen and delivered humanity, the second Adam, the Redeemer of the world Himself. Promised in Eden, announced to the patriarchs, predicted by the prophets, He is born of a virgin, He comes to repair the ravages of sin by making an expiation for it, and to destroy the kingdom of darkness by triumphing over it on the cross. Under this glorious Captain, anticipated or received by faith, is gathered, in all generations, a people, the children of the Most High, "who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Delivered from the condemnation of sin, and from the influence of him who for too long a time had deceived them, reinstated, according to their original destination, in the favor of God, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, they show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." *W. Hare.*——Thus we perceive that the Church began with the very first sinners of our race, and that the gospel began to be revealed also at the beginning of our race. The Bible, therefore, is the record of only one religion ; the development of one and the same way of salvation ; and is the history of one and the same Church from first to last. S. R.

From the time of the Fall, we have two different typical forms, the one after the seed of the serpent, the other after the seed of the woman. Henceforth there is a contest between the serpent and Him who is to destroy the power of the serpent, between the flesh and the Spirit, between the world and the Church. Two manner of people are now seen struggling in the womb of time—a Cain and an Abel, an Ishmael and an Isaac, an Esau and a Jacob, an Absalom and a Solomon, the elder born after the flesh, and the younger born after the Spirit. It is this unity of figure fully as much as the "type" of sound doctrine which gives a consistency, in the minds of believers, to our religion in all ages ; which enables the Christian to profit, to this day, by the teaching of the Old Testament ; to sing, to this day, the song of Moses and the Psalms of David ; and to perceive and feel that there are the same contests now as then, the same contests in the heart, the same contests in the world, between the evil and the good principle, between the first, or nature-born, and the second, or grace-born. In short, there are now, as there have ever been, but two men on our earth typical or representative ; the first man, which is Adam, the second, which is Christ. *McCosh.*

Even the Jewish Rabbins could discern some common ground between the heritage of evil

derived from Adam, and the good to be effected by Messiah. "The secret of Adam," says one of them, "is the secret of Messiah;" and another, "As the first man was the one that sinned, so shall the Messiah be the one to do the sin away." They recognized in Adam and Christ the two heads of humanity, with whom all mankind must be associated for evil or for good. On surer grounds we know that Adam was in this respect "the type of Him that was to come." But in this respect alone; for in all other points we have to think of differences. The only principle that belongs to them in common stands in the relation they hold, the one to a fallen, the other to a restored, offspring. The natural seed of Adam are dealt with as one with himself in transgression and in death, the wages of transgression. And the spiritual seed of Christ are dealt with as one with Him in the consummate righteousness He brought in and in the eternal life. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive"—all who stand connected with Christ in the economy of grace, as they do with Adam in the economy of nature. How could this be, but by the sin of Adam being regarded as the sin of humanity, and the righteousness of Christ as the property of those who by faith rest upon His name? Hence, in Romans 5, along with the facts which in the two cases attest the doctrine of headship, we find the parallel extended so as to include also the respective grounds out of which they spring: "As by the *offence* of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the *righteousness* of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's *disobedience* many were made sinners, so by the *obedience* of one shall many be made righteous." And it is not in the power of human reason to give either a satisfactory view of the apostle's meaning, or a rational account of the facts themselves, on any other ground than this principle of headship. He must know nothing aright of sin or salvation who is incapable of finding comfort in this view of the subject. And yet there is a ground of comfort higher still, in that it secures for believers a condition better than that possessed by man before the fall. For the second Adam has received for Himself and His redeemed an inheritance corresponding to His personal worth and dignity. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. What an elevating prospect! destined to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, and in consequence to share with Him in the life, the blessedness, and the glory which He inherits in the kingdom of the Father! Coupling, then, the end of the divine plan with the beginning, we find that the principle of headship is really fraught with the richest beneficence; for through this an avenue has been laid open for us into the realms above, and our natures have become linked in fellowship of good with what is best and highest in the universe. P. F.

The virtue, then, which comes from our union with Jesus is higher than the sin which comes from our union with Adam is deep. The bliss which attends our connection with the antitype is nobler than the pain which attends our connection with the type is debasing. The relations of the universe to the seed of the woman are more numerous, more honorable, than the relations of the universe to the instigator of our transgression are complicated and sad. *Park.*

The serpent was to have "a seed,"—that is, a party animated by his spirit; while the great Deliverer was to have one animated by his. These two parties would be in perpetual conflict with each other, but at last the party of the serpent would be overthrown. In Cain and Abel, the first born of Adam's sons, appeared the first representatives of these antagonist seeds. The whole history of the church and of the world shows them in perpetual conflict; and so bitter and inveterate is the spirit of the worldly, or serpent's party, toward the godly, that the conflict will never cease until the former are wholly destroyed. W. G. B.——This enmity underlies the mighty conflict of the ages – Christ and Satan each leading on his host to battle, and no peace or even truce arresting hostilities till the victory of the King of Kings shall be complete and ineffably glorious. Thus the first relation between serpent and woman—that of assumed but treacherous friendship—develops into everlasting enmity—God, her real friend, becoming in the person of his incarnate Son, born of woman—her champion and the mighty antagonist of Satan and all his offspring. Here and thus mercy breaks in upon this scene of sin and ruin, and God begins the wonderful process of making the wrath of Satan the occasion of his own infinite glory. H. C.——Christ baffled Satan's temptations, rescued souls out of his hands, cast him out of the bodies of people, dispossessed the strong man armed, and divided the spoil: by his death, he gave a fatal and incurable blow to the Devil's kingdom, a wound to the head of this beast, that can never be healed. As his gospel gets ground, *Satan falls* (Luke 10 : 18), and is *bound* (Rev. 20 : 2). By his grace he treads Satan under his people's feet (Rom. 16 : 20), and will shortly cast him into

the lake of fire (Rev. 20 : 10). . . . As the fruit of this enmity there is a continual conflict between grace and corruption in the hearts of God's people : Satan, by their corruptions, assaults them, buffets them, sifts them, and seeks to devour them ; they, by the exercise of their graces, resist him, wrestle with him, quench his fiery darts, force him to flee from them. H.

As the way of redemption could not be contrived but by an infinite wisdom, so it could not be accomplished but by an infinite power. None but God could shape such a design, and none but God could effect it. The Divine power in temporal deliverances, and freedom from the slavery of human oppressors, veils to that which glitters in redemption ; whereby the devil is defeated in his designs, stripped of his spoils, and yoked in his strength. The power of God in creation requires not those degrees of admiration as in redemption. In creation the world was erected from nothing ; as there was nothing to act, so there was nothing to oppose ; no victorious devil was in that to be subdued, no thundering law to be silenced, no death to be conquered, no transgression to be pardoned and rooted out, no hell to be shut, no ignominious death upon the cross to be suffered. It had been, in the nature of the thing, an easier thing to Divine power to have created a new world, than repaired a broken and purified a polluted one. This is the most admirable work that ever God brought forth in the world, greater than all the marks of his power in the first creation. *Charnock.*——When I think on the difference between God's creating a world and God's pardoning a sin—the one done without effort, the other demanding an instrumentality terribly sublime ; the one effected by a word, the other wrought out in agony and blood on a quaking earth and beneath a darkened heaven—oh, the world created is as nothing by the side of the sin blotted out ; that God can pardon is at the very summit of what is wonderful ; and therefore then, O Lord, do I most know Thee as the omnipotent when I behold in Thee the long-suffering. *H. Melville.*

**16. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.** In maternity a woman *completes her nature.* Every sorrow of body or soul is made into a new thread in the web of affection which she weaves around the life of the child for whom she suffers. She has another blessing in a *certain ease in losing self.* Men find it less natural to be unselfish. The mother almost spontaneously drops off the robe of self. Her sorrow of maternity *brings a blessing to the world.* What silent, forceful lessons of the blessed life has motherhood given to the world ! As her sorrow has been multiplied, so has her power to bestow the blessings of civilized and gentle life been multiplied. This sorrow has been *an education* to the world. The great thought of Christianity is that only through sacrifice of self can life be given to others, or life be realized by the giver. Motherhood permits woman to live her life in another life. It is the likest thing to God's life. When the curse of Genesis is felt the most, then there is the deepest sense of blessing. In the new life given to the world the mother finds her most perfect rapture. Here is an ever-repeated fact that educates the world to understand that life comes out of sacrifice. *Brooke.*

**17–19.** *Moral and physical evil* were not originally in the world. The latter was penally ordained after the former had entered the world by the free act of man, and from this time forward both form an element of the divine order of the world. O.——**Cursed the ground for thy sake.** Before, he was put into the garden to till it and keep it ; but now the soil is to be stubborn and to defy his labor, and cause him pain and disappointment. Before, he had access to the tree of life, which was to make him immortal ; now he is to be driven out from access to it, and to return to the earth again. *Alf.*——Even here there is some mark of mercy : for, whereas the serpent is cursed directly, and that with a reference to the earth he was to travel over ; here on the contrary the earth, rather than the man, is cursed, though for the man's sake and with reference to him. E. H. B.

**18. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.** Whenever man cultivates nature and then abandons her to her own unaided energies, the result is far worse than if he had never attempted to improve her at all. There are no such thorns found in a state of nature as those produced by the ground which man once has tilled, but has now deserted. In the waste clearings amidst the fern brakes of New Zealand, and in the primeval forests of Canada, thorns may now be seen which were unknown before. The nettle and the thistle follow man wherever he goes, and remain as perpetual witnesses of his presence, even though he departs. *Macmillan.*

**19.** The artificial state of most societies does, indeed, keep the lower classes much more depressed than a better state of the world would bring them into ; but at the best, nature unites with revelation in attesting the truth of the sentence passed upon man—*In the sweat of thy face*

*shalt thou eat thy bread.* And this necessity for severe labor is not confined to the cultivation of the earth, but extends to all kinds of human pursuits. *E. Hitchcock.*——This eating our bread in the sweat of our face, is a *curse;* it is a *promise;* it is a *precept.* It is a *curse,* in that God will not suffer the earth to afford us bread without our sweat. It is a *promise,* in that God assureth us we shall have bread for our sweat. And it is a *precept* too, in that God enjoineth us, if we will have bread, to sweat for it. *Bp. Sanderson.*——It is still true that with the vast majority this life is a continual fight against want, and a struggle for the miserable pittance that will supply the barest demands of existence. From the equator with its burning suns to the poles with their frozen seas, the cry of earth's millions goes up for bread, and the life-struggle goes on with a sin-cursed earth, which yields up only to the force of toil the means of existence.

But in another view the Creator was but providing for the highest interests of the fallen creature in making labor his inevitable lot. If it is true that nothing worth attaining of earthly good can be attained and preserved without labor, it is equally true that the labor itself is to man the means of highest blessing, and idleness his direst curse. Nay, under this sentence, he only can rightly serve God who fulfils cheerfully the conditions which God has laid upon him. Hence, the significancy of the song of the old monks: "*Labor ıre est orare*"—"To work is to worship." Under the present economy nothing worth living for can be attained save under this law. All the world's spoken epics, all the world's acted heroism, all the world's suffered martyrdoms, have their root in that great law—Sweat of the brow, sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart! S. R.

The law of Labor is the primal law of the human economy. Our first father was set to work in those days when work and worship were one. And after sin brought its curse upon the earth, the law was written again by the finger of God in the sweat of man's brow. But it was no Cain-mark there. It was not the curse of Cain, that he should toil and sweat; but rather that he should be an idler and a vagabond, stung out of the hive of earth's first workers. The Devil is no friend to labor, for he spirited away Job's oxen and flocks, and sent him to a pile of ashes to scrape his boils at leisure. Labor is one of the best defences against the assaults of the Tempter. He can hardly make a workshop out of an honest, hearty laborer; but a lounger need hold out no sign-board. Labor is the glory of man. It makes him a producer—I had almost said a creator; thus giving a proof that he is the image of God. It is the spice of man's food; the balm of sleep; a good companion for the conscience; the handmaid of piety. It is widely and closely related to all human interests. . . . And what a magnificent workshop God has fitted up for man in the world which he inhabits. The forces of nature wait to be wooed and won. The vegetable kingdom unlocks her stores to the key of Labor. The animal kingdom bows its neck to the yoke man puts upon it. The world is stocked with fuel, with forces, with mechanical powers, with a thousand conveniences for intelligent, contriving mechanical workers. A sovereign voice in nature invites and summons man to Labor. *T. H. Robinson.*

In a life of gayety, or a merely thoughtful existence, in that state of leisure to which so many minds are exposed, woe and trial to the spirit that has nothing *for the hands* to do! Misery to him or her who emancipates himself or herself from the universal law, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Evil thoughts, despondency, sensual feeling, sin in every shape is before him, to beset and madden, often to ruin him. *F. W. Robertson.*——If the love of God be the ruling motive in our daily life, if his will be our law, his honor our end, there will rest even upon the dullest and most trivial work we perform, a light from heaven to ennoble and to glorify it; for God, who rules in us, will by our actions make himself known to men. You have not imposed upon yourselves the work of your life; it is God who has imposed it upon you. Every task God has given you to perform, must be a matter of moment to you, for every such task is a token of grace: it is something that the King of heaven and of earth has chosen us to do for him. When a man comes to do his daily task in the spirit of a faith like this, the curse which rests upon our labor is taken away, and transmuted into a blessing. A. T.——The same devotion to God's will that is the solace of distress is the inspiration of labor. We have not ascended to the loftiest and worthiest motive of all well-doing till we have reached this mark. You and I, in this little day of life and with these poor powers, can verily do something to further the purposes and glory of the ineffable Name. Could that thought penetrate our common avocations, business, hospitality, trades, studies, to what a height of sacred dignity would it lift them, and of what dross and meanness, and selfish grossness, and besotted care, would it purge them clean! F. D. H.

**Unto dust shalt thou return.** The end and consummation of all his earthly misery —*bodily* death, "*returning to dust*"—is announced to man as the second article of his sentence. It means temporal death with all preceding pains and infirmities, to be succeeded by the second death in the case of those not delivered from its power. In this, too, punishment and deliverance are conjoined—punishment for the sinner, deliverance from all earthly troubles for the believer; God's justice in league with his compassion. C. G. B.——The sentence, as far as temporal death is concerned, has from the beginning, with two exceptions only, been faithfully and punctually executed. Every successive instance of mortality is a fresh manifestation of God's truth. For six thousand years, one generation has been going and another coming. So continual and unvarying has been the succession of generation to generation, that death has come to be regarded and spoken of as the course of nature; and we are in danger of forgetting that it is the execution of a sentence, that it is a penal infliction. And this punctual faithfulness in the execution of a part of God's sentence against sin, is used, and rightly used, for impressing the conviction that the execution of the whole is as sure as that of the part. *Wardlaw.*——Diseases have shattered the excellent frame of man's body; and by a new dispensation immortality is swallowed up of mortality. The same disaster and decay has invaded his spirituals. The passions rebel, every faculty would usurp and rule; and there are so many governors that there can be no government. The light within us is become darkness; and the understanding, that should be eyes to the blind faculty of the will, is blind itself, and so brings all the inconveniences that attend a blind follower under the conduct of a blind guide. He that would have a clear demonstration of this, let him reflect upon that numerous litter of strange, senseless, absurd opinions that crawl about the world to the disgrace of reason and the unanswerable reproach of a broken intellect. *South.*

In Adam the race came under "the law of sin and death." To convince man of his sinfulness, to awaken in him the desire for redemption, and to make known to him the nature and mode of this redemption, must be henceforth the primary object of the Divine teaching. God will not only be known as the Supreme Ruler, but also as the Holy One who abhors sin, as the Righteous Judge who punishes unrighteousness, and as the Merciful Father who forgives the repentant. These aspects of God's character we may, therefore, expect to see made prominent in his subsequent dealings with sinful and disobedient men. *S. J. Andrews.*

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This is the account of the entrance of sin, to which the Bible is pledged. It came into the world by the will of man contravening the known will of God—not by the gradual decline of a race of men from primitive simplicity and purity, but "by one man's disobedience," the fall from his integrity of the head and parent of our race. Thereafter, sin, having obtained an entrance into the world, continued and spread by a law of descent and a power of contagion. And judgment followed; death by sin; —and "death has passed on all, for all have sinned." D. F.

The administration of mediatorial rule existed from the time of the entrance of sin into our world. The Son of God then entered on the administration of all his mediatorial functions. The voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day, announced him as a *prophet:* the institution of sacrifices, which was coeval with the fall of man, exhibited him as a *priest:* and the warfare betwixt the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, which then commenced, unfolded his *regal* character. In this latter capacity, he never ceased afterwards to act. The formation of the church in Eden; the translation of Abel's righteous soul to glory; the reorganization of the church with Noah; the covenant made with Abraham, and renewed with Isaac and Jacob; the establishment of the Jewish economy under Moses; the many interpositions made on behalf of the armies of Israel, by which they were rendered victorious over their enemies; the appointment of Judges; and the raising up of kings in the line of David, to dispense the benefits of civil government to God's ancient people—are all so many regal acts of Prince Messiah. *Symington.*

In the first three and the last three chapters of the Bible we find the initiatory and concluding links in the great chain of evolutions, according to which the decree of God's mercy is progressively unfolded until the completion of his kingdom. In the one we have the first heaven and earth ruined by the fall of man; in the other, a new heaven and a new earth, the tabernacle of God with men. In the one the victory of the serpent amid the exultation of hell; in the other, his overthrow and deserved reward. Here a paradise lost; there a paradise restored. Here the first Adam, with his helpmate, tempted and fallen; there the second Adam, with his holy and blessed bride, the

Church. Here death and misery ; there resurrection and life, and deliverance from all evil. Here the commencement of man's chronology ; there its termination. C. G. B.

The story of the Fall, like that of the Creation, has wandered over the world. Heathen nations have transplanted and mixed it up with their geography, their history, their mythology, although it has never so completely changed form, and color, and spirit, that you cannot recognize it. In the Law, it preserves the character of a universal, human, world-wide fact : and the groans of Creation, the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and the heart of every man, conspire in their testimony to the most literal truth of the narrative. It may be that in this history of man's fall, and of God's preparation for the redemption of men through judgment and struggles, facts and dress are to be distinguished ; but with the substantial reality of this history the religion of redemption stands and falls. Also, the historical verity of the origin of mankind is one of the indispensable presuppositions of Christianity, which, without it, can be the religion of the most perfect morals, but not the religion of the redemption of mankind. *Delit.*

## Section 26.

SACRIFICE. EXPULSION FROM EDEN. MAN'S CHANGED CONDITION. THE CHERUBIM AND SWORD.

GENESIS 3 : 20–24.

20 AND the man called his wife's name Eve ; because she was the mother of all living. And
21 the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them.
22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil ;
and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for
23 ever : therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from
24 whence he was taken. So he drove out the man ; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

**20.** " And Adam called his wife's name *Life*, because she was the mother of all the *living*." This is a proper and faithful representation of the Hebrew text. A. C.——If the first of a race fall before he has any offspring, the race is fallen. The guilt, the depravity, the penalty, all belong to the race. This is a great mystery. But it seems to follow inevitably from the constitution of a race, and it has clear evidences of its truth both in the facts and the doctrines of the Bible. When we come to view the sin of our first parents in this light, it is seen to entail tremendous consequences to every individual of the race. The single transgression has involved the guilt, the depravity, and the death, not only of Adam, but of that whole race which was in him, and thus has changed the whole character and condition of mankind throughout all time. M.

**21. Coats of skins.** This presupposes the killing of animals, and permission given by God to do so, which laid the foundation of bloody sacrifices. What had been done by themselves under the first impulse of shame after the fall, this God now does for them after a more perfect manner. He sanctions the feeling of shame, and the sense of decency and propriety which arises therefrom. *Gerl.*——It is probable that they were the skins of beasts slain in sacrifice, which was then first instituted in ratification of the gracious covenant, just made by God with our first parents ; and which was intended the better to represent to them their guilt, and that the promised seed should vanquish the devil, and redeem them by shedding his blood. *Patrick.*——The commission of sin, and the promise of a Redeemer, being the grand objects to which sacrifice refers, no period seems more fit for its appointment than that at which sin first entered and the promise was first delivered : that is, the period immediately succeeding the fall. If sacrifice be admitted to have been coeval with the fall, every argument which has been adduced to prove that Abel offered sacrifices in obedience to the *divine injunction*, will apply with increased force to show that Adam must have done the same. The *whole* of the animal (if the offering be supposed an

*holocaust,* as there is good reason to conclude all to have been until the Mosaic institution), would here be devoted to the uses of religion except the skin, which would be employed for the purpose of clothing. *Magee.*

As soon as the promise of mercy had been disclosed to the offenders, and the constitution of mingled goodness and severity brought in, God made coats to clothe them with, and these coats of skins. But clothing so obtained argued the sacrifice of life in the animal that furnished them ; and thus, through the death of an inferior yet innocent living creature, was the needed relief brought to their disquieted consciences. The outward and corporeal here manifestly had respect to the inward and spiritual. The covering of their nakedness was a gracious token from the hand of God, that the sin which had alienated them from Him, and made them conscious of uneasiness, was henceforth to be in His sight as if it were not ; so that in covering their flesh, He at the same time covered their consciences. So God's fundamental act in removing and covering out of sight the shame of conscious guilt in the first offenders, would naturally and rightfully be viewed as a revelation of God, teaching them how in henceforth dealing with Him they were to proceed in effecting the removal of guilt, and appearing, notwithstanding it, in the presence of God. They found, in this divine act, the key to a justified condition, and an acceptable intercourse with Heaven. Had they not done so, it would have been incapable of rational explanation, how a believing Abel should so soon have appeared in possession of it. We thus hold sacrifice—sacrifice in the higher sense, not as expressive of dependence and thankfulness merely, but as connected with sin and forgiveness, expiatory sacrifice—to have been, as to its foundation, of divine origin. It had its rise in an act of God, done for the express purpose of relieving guilty consciences of their sense of shame and confusion ; and from the earliest periods of recorded worship it stands forth to our view as the religious solemnity in which faith had its most peculiar exercise, and for which God bestowed the tokens of his acceptance and blessing. P. F.

The clothing of our first parents by the hand of God had respect to more than the investiture of the body ; it was symbolical of spiritual things and a provision for that guilt felt as nakedness or exposure to Divine wrath. Were it merely to supply a physical want, there was no reason why a suitable vegetable production should not be selected in preference to the skins of animals which necessitated the taking away of life at a time when animal food was not allowed as an article of human diet. No probable account can be given of the way in which the bodies of the animals were disposed of, if not offered in sacrifice and consumed upon the altar. From its very nature and design as unfolded in scripture, sacrifice must have been contemporaneous, or nearly so with the first announcement of redemption. D. M.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the *sacrifice of living animals* was now instituted as a prophetic figure of the great sacrifice which should fulfil this promise. The whole reason for sacrifice began to exist now : its use is taken for granted in the next chapter ; and it continues throughout the patriarchal age without the record of any other beginning. Thus early, then, man learned that, " without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin ;" that his own forfeited life was redeemed, and to be restored by the sacrifice of the coming " seed of the woman ;" and that he was placed by God under a new *dispensation of mercy.* Nay, even his punishment was a mercy ; for his suffering was a discipline to train him in submission to God's will. The repentance of our first parents is nowhere expressly stated : but it is implied here and in the subsequent narrative. P. S. ——The Church of God hath always believed that Adam repented and laid hold on the mercy of a second covenant, and was received again into divine favor ; although there be no express mention of this in his history. We do not read of any precept or law given by God to Adam after his fall, but we find the practice of sacrificing in his family. And it will be very difficult to him that considers the matter thoroughly, to imagine that he invented that rite of his own head ; he was taught it therefore by the command and institution of God. And it is highly reasonable to think that at the same time when God gave a second law and institution, he encouraged him also to the obedience of it by a promise of acceptance and restitution to his former favor. Upon this hope doubtless he renewed his allegiance to his Creator, and devoted himself to the worship and service of God, and taught his sons, Cain and Abel, to do so likewise. From him they learned to present their several offerings to the Lord (Gen. 4), where we read also (ver. 4, 5) that *God had respect to Abel's offering,* and declared his acceptance of it by some visible sign taken notice of by his brother Cain ; probably, as the Hebrew doctors tell us, " by a fire from heaven, inflaming his offering." *Bull.*

It is not affirmed in this book that God ordained the offering of sacrifice to himself, but it is made evident that acceptable worshippers, such as Abel, Noah, and Abraham, followed some intimation of the Divine will, and made their oblations—not according to mere human impulses or instincts, but in faith and in the obedience of faith. Abel's sacrifice is affirmed in the New Testament to have been offered "in faith." With sacrifice Noah took possession of a New World ; with sacrifice at Shechem, Abraham entered on the Land of Promise. The heathen soon debased the ordinance of sacrifice to cruel and superstitious rites, but from the beginning its idea was the solemn devotement of life to God, pouring out the soul unto death, in type of the slain "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." D. F.

Man's first sin was an effort at independence ; his first acceptable act of worship, as a sinner, must be a profound acknowledgment that he is more dependent than ever. His first sin was an action ; his first expression of sorrow must be an act of self-condemnation. And such is *sacrifice*—self-immolation "in a figure." His sin was a virtual diversion of all the kingdoms of nature which had been given into his hand that he as their interpreter and minister might give the glory of the whole to God ; in his first sacrifice, he is to bring them all back again—for in the altar, the wood, and the victim, they were all present—and is thus to take them as the witnesses of his guilt in abusing them, and of his penitence and dependence in restoring them again to the Great Proprietor. And thus the first promise and the first institute, like the first prohibition, were designed to impress man with a sense of his entire dependence, and to augment his motives of obedience ; so that they belong, in this respect, to the one great system of means—proclaiming the same truths, and promoting the same end. And this principle we may expect to find pervading the whole economy of the Divine manifestation ; exhibiting the blessed God as taking occasion from man's guilty and helpless condition to unfold a new aspect of his own all sufficiency. J. H.

Man is not the only being who has fallen, and yet man is the only being who is redeemed. When we inquire as to the reason of this arrangement we find none. It is one of the deep things which belong to God. It is an impressive display of sovereignty, where all that is left for us is to bow and to adore. We might have supposed that the higher race would have been selected, and that God would have glorified his mercy on the still more conspicuous theatre from which they had sought to cast themselves down. And altogether independently of the example of their rejection, we might have anticipated that man's ruin would have been final and hopeless. Man does not forgive where he has been insulted as God was in man's rebellion. Nations do not tolerate blows aimed at their independence and their very existence, and therefore man's revolt might have been expected to draw down swift and remediless destruction, for it was a blow aimed at God's throne and being. That God's thoughts should in such a crisis have been thoughts of peace is the wonder of unfallen beings and of those who are redeemed. They cannot rise in thought to that awful council wherein, though every foreseen trespass demanded vengeance, mercy yet rejoiced against judgment, without exclaiming, "This is not the manner of man, O Lord God." *Cairns.*

Mercy alone could make the dispensation possible. Mercy both introduced it, and was introduced by it. Then first mercy became known to man ; perhaps to the universe. From the moment man sinned and incurred condemnation, it is difficult to conceive on what ground the human race could have been perpetuated, apart from a remedial scheme. For justice to have taken its direct course would have involved the destruction of the transgressors. The dispensation of mercy literally caught man in the very act of falling, arrested his descent to perdition, and placed him on an entirely new footing. Hence, the entire constitution of things by which humanity subsists is represented in Scripture as resting on a basis of mediation. And although this great fact may have only dimly dawned on the antediluvian believer, he must have been often amazed at that outburst of grace which was ever flowing onward in a dispensation of good, encircling him and all his race. For the same reason that mercy was free for any, it was free for all. The promise was "the Gospel preached before" to the antediluvian world. The Protevangelium was "to every creature." The altar was unfenced. The various interpositions of Heaven to re-enforce its means of winning attention were so many devices of mercy. The "preachers of righteousness" were its agents. The period of respite, during the building of the ark, was one long wail of mercy. J. H.

**22. Lest he take of the tree of life, and live forever.** The design of the tree of knowledge was entirely moral : it was set there as the test and instrument of probation ; and its disuse, if we may so speak, was its only

allowable use. The tree of life, however, had its natural use, like the other trees of the garden ; and both from its name and its position in the centre of the garden we may infer that the effect of its fruit upon the human frame was designed to be altogether peculiar. The words seem plainly to indicate that the tree of life was originally intended for the food of man ; that the fruit it yielded was the divinely appointed medium of maintaining in him the power of an endless life ; and that now, since he had sinned against God, and had lost all right to the possession of such a power, he was debarred from access to the natural means of sustaining it, by being himself rigorously excluded from the garden of Eden. . . . "To him that overcometh," says Jesus, after having entered on His glory, "will I give to eat of the tree of life, that is in the midst of the paradise of God." And again, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The least we can gather from such declarations is, that everything which was lost in Adam shall be again recovered in Christ for the heirs of His salvation. The tempter has prevailed long, but, God be thanked, he is not to prevail forever. There is yet to come forth from the world new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness shall dwell—another paradise with its tree of life—and a ransomed people created anew after the image of God, and fitted for the high destiny of manifesting His glory before the universe. There will be a sphere and condition of being immensely higher and better than what was originally set up by the hand of God. As the occupants here shall be the second Adam and His seed—the Lord from heaven, in whom humanity has been raised to peerless majesty and splendor—there must also be a corresponding rise in the nature of the things to be occupied. A higher sphere of action and enjoyment shall be brought in, because there is a higher style of being to possess it. There shall not be the laying anew of earth's old foundations, but rather the raising of these aloft to a nobler elevation—not nature revived merely, but nature glorified—humanity, no longer as it was in the earthy and natural man, but as it is and ever shall be in the spiritual and heavenly, and that placed in a theatre of life and blessing every way suitable to its exalted condition. The internal and the external, the personal and the relative, shall be in harmonious and fitting adjustment to each other. All hunger shall be satisfied, and all thirst forever quenched. The inhabitant shall never say, "I am sick." And like the river itself, which flows in perennial fulness from the throne of God, the well-spring of life in the redeemed shall never know interruption or decay. Blessed, then, it may be truly said, are those who do the commandments of God, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. P. F.

**23. Sent him forth from the garden.** That mankind should have been expelled from the region of life, and made subject to a curse which doomed them to sorrow and trouble, disease and death, in consequence of their violation of a single command of Heaven, was a proof patent to all, and memorable in the annals of the world, that *everything in the divine government is subordinate to the principles of rectitude.* "There was in it," as was strikingly said by Irving, "a most sublime act of holiness. God, after making Adam a creature for an image and likeness of Himself, did resolve him into vile dust through viler corruption, when once he had sinned ; proving that one act of sin was, in God's sight, of far more account than a whole world teeming with beautiful and blessed life, which He would rather send headlong into death than suffer one sin of His creature to go unpunished. And though creation's teeming fountain might flow on ever so long, still the flowing waters of created life must ever empty themselves into the gulf of death. This is a most sublime exaltation of the moral above the material." P. F.

Eden was lost : nor could man regain and reenter it. This is the substance of the whole narrative. The first probation of human nature ended in shame, suffering, recrimination, remorse, and death. The world has had one Eden—and only one. Man has never discovered and reclaimed it since our progenitors lost it. Fable has told us of the garden of the Hesperides, of Elysian fields, but who has ever found an Eden? We have read of royal magnificence, of sumptuous palaces, of gardens wrought by art, watered by fountains, and replenished by affluence, but we have never read of human abodes in which there existed the innocence, the love, the fearlessness, the joy, of original paradise. We have never read of the royal residence into which death might not intrude ; nor the bosom into which sorrow never could enter. W. A.

*The world* in the midst of which we live is not now what it was as it came from the hands of its Creator. Harsh discords and disharmonies have found their way into it, and make themselves everywhere to be heard. What means,

for instance, the volcano, with its clouds of ashes and streams of liquid fire, carrying death and destruction to the peaceful towns and villages that reposed in fancied security at its base? What mean those fierce throes and shakings of the earth, which cause whole cities to topple down on their dwellers, and to crush them beneath their ruins? What the wild tornadoes, which strew the coasts with the wrecks of ships and the corpses of men? What, again, the pestilential marsh, the very breath of which is fatal to all human life? The state of Paradise has disappeared not for man only, but for the whole creation. Man did not fall alone ; God had set him as the lord aud king of the earth, in whom all its glories should centre, in whom they all should be summed up. Only a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor, he was to have dominion over the works of God's hands ; all things were put under his feet. But when he rebelled against God, this lower nature rebelled against him. The confusion which sin had introduced into his relations to God found its echo and avenging counterpart in the confusions of nature's relations to him ; all became out of joint ; he dragged all after him in a common ruin. Glimpses, indeed, of the beauty of Paradise still survive ; fragments of that broken sceptre, which man once wielded over the inferior creation, still remain in his hands. But much, very much, has disappeared. *Trench.*

Man was still the subject of moral government. No power was lost from the soul. His emotions retained their susceptibility, though diverted from their highest object. His power of moral discrimination was not destroyed, though overruled. His will remained as active and energetic as before. His chosen motives came now, indeed, from an inferior domain ; the right disposition of his powers was gone, each being placed in a new and a false relation to the others, but all remained. Man's second sin was as free as his first. J. H.——After his fall man retained freedom of choice. As by his voluntary act he had become sinful, so also must he by free choice accept salvation. Neither the one nor the other could be forced upon him from without. K.——If no power had been lost from the human constitution, neither had any law of moral government been repealed, nor any perfection of the Divine character obscured. The theology of unfallen man, as implied especially in the primal law, was—a powerful, wise, and beneficent Creator ; that Creator his equitable moral Governor ; and immortal happiness in prospect as the reward of his obedience ; and a threatened death or loss as the deserved penalty of disobedience. And this was no less the theory of fallen man. The new revelation of Mercy involved no withdrawment of the claims of Justice. The sin of man was no frustration of moral government ; for that government showed itself capable of enforcing its sanctions With man's first moment of conscious guilt commenced a process of self-punishment, for that very consciousness involved suffering. The external sentence only interpreted his fears, and ratified his self-pronounced condemnation. Nor was he less a subject of moral government after Mercy had arrested him in his guilty descent than he was before. That mercy involved no relaxation of law, no apology for the government under which man had fallen. So far from arraigning the equity of that rule, mercy supported it, forgiveness proclaimed it. Sacrifice and expiation were the methods of indemnifying and celebrating it. Mercy left man in the hand of justice still, and only rescued him from its punishment ; and just so much of mercy as there was in the rescue was there of justice in the punishment. Hence, the original government was still in force. J. H.

All was not absolutely lost. The knowledge which our first parents had of the work of creation, and of the character of God as therein displayed, could not altogether vanish from their minds ; it had formed the groundwork of that adoration of God and fellowship with him which constituted the religion of Paradise ; and even after Paradise was lost, they must still have derived from it, and preserved in the depths of their spiritual being, some of the more fundamental elements of truth and duty. That all things were made by God ; that as they came from his hand they were, one and all, very good ; that the work of creation in six days was succeeded by a day of peculiar sacredness and rest ; that man himself was made in the image of God, and as such had all here below placed in a relation of subservience to him, while, because he bore God's image, he was bound to use all in obedience to the will of God, and for the glory of His name ;—these, and various other collateral points of knowledge, which must have been familiar to man before the fall,—since otherwise he should have been ignorant alike of his proper place and calling in creation,—could not fail to abide also with him after it. And since it pleased God not to destroy His fallen creature, but to perpetuate his existence on earth, and amid mingled experiences of good and evil to animate him with the prospect of

ultimate recovery, it was to be understood that all creation privileges and gifts stood as at first conferred, except in so far as they might be expressly recalled or through the altered constitution of things placed in another relation to man than they originally held. Paradise itself, with its ample heritage of life and blessing, had ceased to be to him what it had been. But the mutual relation of the fallen pair themselves; their common relation to the world around them, with its living creatures and manifold productions; their higher relation to God, as still bearing, though now sadly marred, His divine image and called to reflect it by a becoming imitation of His example;—these all remained in principle, only modified in action by the workings of sin on man's part, and on God's by the introduction of an economy of grace.

That everything was not subjected to instantaneous and overwhelming destruction, was itself a proof of the introduction of a principle of grace into the divine administration. The mere respite of the sentence of death (which, if justice alone had prevailed, must have been executed on the very day of transgression), and the establishment of an order of things which still contained many tokens of divine goodness, gave evidence of thoughts of mercy and loving-kindness in God toward man. The explicit assurance that "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent," however dimly understood at first, could not fail even then to light up the conviction in the sinful heart, that it was the purpose of God to aid man in obtaining a recovery from the ruin of the fall. But this must evidently be done in a way of grace. All natural good had been forfeited by the fall, and death—the utter destruction of life and blessing—had become the common doom of humanity. Whatever inheritance, therefore, of good, or whatever opportunity of acquiring it, might be again presented, could be traced to no other source than the divine beneficence. P. F.

**24. And he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life.** The remarkable matter in this statement is, that the symbols at the east of Eden were in form precisely the same as those symbols of the immediate Divine presence which marked the place of worship in the subsequent ages of the Church. In the formal establishment of a ritual of worship through Moses, the cherubim with the brightness between them was the specific symbol of the immediate special presence of Jehovah with his worshipping people, and in the subsequent visions of David, Ezekiel and John the same symbols stand forth pre-eminently as the tokens of Jehovah's presence. So when man is driven out of Eden, no longer to taste of the tree of life, Jehovah not only gives him ordinances of worship, but sets up for him the symbols of His presence to commune with him in the worship. It was, doubtless, at the gate of Eden that Adam came to offer the appointed sacrifices and consult Jehovah, just as afterward the worshippers at the tabernacle and the temple came to worship, at the immediate dwelling-place of Jehovah. It was before this symbol that Abel brought his offering, and, by the coming forth of the brightness to consume it, he saw that "Jehovah had respect unto it." It was from this "presence of the Lord," that Cain "went out" when he became an apostate. Thus when man the sinner is driven out of Eden and no longer allowed to "eat of the tree of life," it is not to utter hopelessness and irretrievable doom. S. R.

If the appearance of the Edenic cherubim denoted the reality of the Divine presence, the following are some of the great truths which the arrangement significantly expressed: That although God had shown himself justly offended with sinful man, and that He could not be disobeyed with impunity, yet He had not withdrawn from the world, but was still "a God near at hand and not afar off." That restoration to immortal life was not impossible. Such impossibility might have been emphatically signified by destroying the *sign* of immortality—the tree of life. But *that* being allowed to stand, the thing signified by it might be supposed to remain also. The presence of the sword-flame in the way which led to the sacred pledge, however, denoted man's utter forfeiture of the blessing, and that if it ever became his, it could only be by an act of sovereign mercy. And thus the ever-speaking symbol proclaimed both the justice and the grace of God, and tended to keep alive in the human breast the emotions of penitence for the past and of hope for the future. It formed, in connection with the first promise and the institute of sacrifice, an organic part of the new outline of the Divine manifestation. J. H.

*The sword*, with its flaming brightness and revolving movements, might be suspended there simply as the emblem of God's avenging justice, and as the instrument of man's exclusion from the region of life. In that one service the end of its appointment might be fulfilled, and its symbolical meaning exhausted. Such appears

to have been the case. But the cherubim, which also had a place assigned them toward the east of the garden, must have had some further use, as the sword alone would have been sufficient to prevent access to the forbidden region. The cherubim must have been added for the purpose of rendering more complete the instruction intended to be conveyed to man by means of the symbolical apparatus here presented to his contemplation. P. F.

**The cherubim.** According to the exact rendering : " And He placed (or, made to dwell) at the east of the garden of Eden *the cherubim*" —not certain unknown figures or imaginary existences, but the specific forms of being, familiarly designated by that name.

1. As to *the form and appearance of the cherubim*, there is nothing definite in the earlier Scriptures, nor are the accounts in the later perfectly uniform. They are uniform in two leading respects, which may be regarded as the more important elements in the cherubic form. (1) They had the predominating appearance of a man. (2) With the form of a man, other animal forms were combined—those of the lion, the ox, and the eagle. These three creatures, along with man, make up together the most perfect forms of animal existence. And hence the old Jewish proverb : " Four are the highest in the world—the lion among wild beasts, the ox among tame cattle, the eagle among birds, man among all (creatures) ; but God is supreme over all." The meaning is, that in these four kinds are exhibited the highest forms of creature-life on earth, but that God is still infinitely exalted above these ; since all creature-life springs out of His fulness, and is dependent on His hand. So that a creature compounded of all these—bearing in its general shape and structure the lineaments of a man, but associating with the human the appearance and properties also of the three next highest orders of animal existence—might seem a kind of concrete manifestation of created life on earth—a sort of personified creaturehood. It is an ideal combination ; and we can think of no reason why the singular combination it presents of animal forms, should have been set upon that of man as the trunk and centre of the whole, unless it were to exhibit the higher elements of humanity in some kind of organic connection with certain distinctive properties of the inferior creation. The nature of man is incomparably the highest upon earth, and towers loftily above all the rest by powers peculiar to itself. And yet we can easily conceive how this very nature of man might be greatly raised and ennobled, by having superadded to its own inherent qualities those of which the other animal forms now before us stand as the appropriate types. Thus the *lion* among ancient nations generally, and in particular among the Hebrews, was the representative of king-like majesty and peerless strength. So the *eagle* is king among birds, and stands preeminent in the two properties that more peculiarly distinguish the winged creation—those of vision and flight. Finally, the *ox* was among the ancients the common image of patient labor and productive energy. Assuming these points, we are warranted to think of the cherubim as presenting in their composite structure, and having as the very basis of that structure the form of man—the only being on earth that is possessed of a rational and moral nature ; yet combining along with this, and organically uniting to it, the animal representatives of majesty and strength, winged velocity, patient and productive labor.

2. A second point of inquiry respects *the designations* applied to the cherubim in Scripture. The term cherubim itself being the more common and specific of these, would naturally call for consideration first, if any certain key could be found to its correct import. But the term *cherub* may now be confidently assigned to that class of words whose original import is involved in hopeless obscurity. There is another designation, however, originally applied to them by Ezekiel, and the sole designation given to them in the Apocalypse, from which some additional light may be derived. This expression is in the original *living ones*, or *living creatures*. The Septuagint uses the quite synonymous term *zoa ;* and this, again, is the word uniformly employed by John, when speaking of the cherubim. The frequency with which this name is used of the cherubim is remarkable. In Ezekiel and the Apocalypse together it occurs nearly thirty times, and may consequently be regarded as peculiarly expressive of the symbolical character of the cherubim. It presents them to our view as exhibiting the property of life in its highest state of power and activity ; therefore, as creatures altogether instinct with life.

3. *The positions assigned to the cherubim in Scripture* are properly but two, and, by having regard only to what is essential in the matter, they might possibly be reduced to one. They are the garden of Eden, and the dwelling-place or throne of God in the tabernacle. The first local residence in which the cherubim appear was the garden of Eden—the earthly paradise. What, however, was this but the proper home

and habitation of life? of life generally, but emphatically of the divine life! Everything there seemed to breathe the air and to exhibit the fresh and blooming aspect of life. Streams of water ran through it to supply all its productions with nourishment, and keep them in perpetual healthfulness; multitudes of living creatures roamed amid its bowers, and the tree of life, at once the emblem and the seal of immortality, rose in the centre, as if to shed a vivifying influence over the entire domain. Most fitly was it called by the Rabbins, "the land of life." But it was life in the higher sense—life, not merely as opposed to bodily decay and dissolution, but as opposed also to sin, which brings death to the soul. Eden was the garden of delight, which God gave to man as the image of Himself, the possessor of that spiritual and holy life which has its fountainhead in God. And the moment man ceased to fulfil the part required of him, and yielded himself to the service of unrighteousness, he lost his heritage of blessing, and was driven forth as an heir of mortality and corruption from the hallowed region of life. When, therefore, the cherubim were set in the garden to occupy the place which man had forfeited by his transgression, it was impossible but that they should be regarded as the representatives, not of life merely, but of the life that is in God, and in connection with which evil cannot dwell.

The other position assigned to the cherubim is in immediate connection with the dwelling-place and throne of God. In the inner sanctuary Moses was commanded to make two cherubim, one on each end of the ark of the covenant, and to place them so that they should stand with outstretched wings, their faces toward each other, and toward the mercy-seat, the lid of the ark, which lay between them. That mercy-seat, or the space immediately above it, bounded on either side by the cherubim, and covered by their wings, was the throne of God, as the God of the Old Covenant, the ideal seat of the divine commonwealth in Israel. "*There*," said God to Moses, "will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment to the children of Israel." This is the fundamental passage regarding the connection of the cherubim with the throne of God; and it is carefully to be noted, that while the seat of the divine presence and glory is said to be *above* the mercy-seat, it is also said to be *between* the cherubim. The same form of expression is used also in another passage in the Pentateuch, which may likewise be called a fundamental one: "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation (the tent of meeting) to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim." Hence the Lord was represented as the God "who dwelleth between the cherubim," according to our version and correctly as to the sense; though the more exact rendering would be, the God who dwelleth in (inhabiteth), or occupies (viz, as a throne or seat) the cherubim. It thus appears that the kind of life which was symbolized by the cherubim was life most nearly and essentially connected with God—life as it is, or shall be, held by those who dwell in His immediate presence, and form the very inclosure and covering of His throne: pre-eminently, therefore, spiritual and holy life. Holiness becomes God's house in general; and of necessity it rises to its highest creaturely representation in those who are regarded as compassing about the most select and glorious portion of the house—the seat of the living God.

4. As to *the kinds of agency* attributed to the cherubim. In connection with the garden of Eden, it is merely said that the cherubim were made to dwell at the east of the garden, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way to the tree of life. The two instruments—the cherubim and the sword—are associated together in regard to this keeping. And the most natural thought is, that as in the keeping there was a twofold idea, so a twofold representation was given to it: that the occupancy was more immediately connected with the cherubim, and the defence against intrusion with the flaming sword. One does not see otherwise what need there could have been for both. Nor is it possible to conceive how the ends in view could otherwise have been served. It was beyond all doubt for man's spiritual instruction that such peculiar instruments were employed at the east of the garden of Eden, to awaken and preserve in his bosom right thoughts of the God with whom he had to do. But an image of terror and repulsion was not alone sufficient for this. There was needed along with it an image of mercy and hope; and both were given in the appearances that actually presented themselves. When the eye of man looked to the sword, with its burnished and fiery aspect, he could not but be struck with awe at the thought of God's severe and retributive justice. But when he saw at the same time, in near and friendly con-

nection with that emblem of Jehovah's righteousness, living or life-like forms of being cast pre-eminently in his own mould, but bearing along with his the likeness also of the choicest species of the animal creation around him—when he saw this, what could he think but that still for creatures of earthly rank, and for himself most of all, an interest was reserved by the mercy of God in the things that pertained to the blessed region of life? That region could not now, by reason of sin, be actually held by him ; but it was provisionally held—by composite forms of creature life, in which his nature appeared as the predominating element. And with what design, if not to teach that when that nature of his should have nothing to fear from the avenging justice of God, it should regain its place in the holy and blissful haunts from which it had meanwhile been excluded? So that, standing before the eastern approach to Eden, and scanning with intelligence the appearances that there presented themselves to his view, the child of faith might say to himself, That region of life is not finally lost to me. It has neither been blotted from the face of creation, nor intrusted to natures of another sphere. Earthly forms still hold possession of it. Such a line of reflection manifestly lay within the reach of the earliest members of a believing seed ; especially since the light it is supposed to have conveyed was only supplementary to that embodied in the first grand promise to the fallen, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.

But the information in this line, and by means of these materials, reaches its furthest limit, when, in the Apocalyptic vision of a triumphant Church, the four and twenty elders, who represent her, are seen sitting in royal state and crowned majesty close beside the throne, with the cherubic forms in and around it. *There*, at last, the ideal and the actual freely meet together—the merely symbolical representatives of the life of God, and its real possessors, the members of a redeemed and glorified Church. And the inspiring element of the whole, that which at once explains all and connects all harmoniously together, is the central object appearing there of "a Lamb, as if it had been slain, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders." Here the mystery resolves itself ; in this consummate wonder all other wonders cease, all difficulties vanish. The Lamb of God, uniting together heaven and earth, human guilt and divine mercy, man's nature and God's perfections, has opened a pathway for the fallen to the very height and pinnacle of being. And when the better country breaks upon our view—when the new heavens and the new earth supplant the old, then also the ideal gives way to the real. We see another paradise with its river and tree of life, a present God and a presiding Saviour, holy angels and a countless multitude of redeemed spirits rejoicing in the fulness of blessing and glory provided for them ; but no sight is anywhere to be seen of the cherubim of glory. They have fulfilled the end of their temporary existence, and vanish like the guiding stars of night before the bright sunshine of eternal day.

To sum up, then : The cherubim were in their very nature and design artificial and temporary forms of being—uniting in their composite structure the distinctive features of the highest kinds of creaturely existence on earth—man's first and chiefly. They were set up for representations, to the eye of faith, of earth's living creaturehood, and more especially of its rational and immortal though fallen head, with reference to the better hopes and destiny in prospect. From the very first they gave promise of a restored condition to the fallen ; and by the use afterward made of them the light became clearer and more distinct. By their designations, the positions assigned them, the actions from time to time ascribed to them, as well as their own peculiar structure, it was intimated that the good in prospect should be secured in perfect consistence with the claims of God's righteousness ; that restoration to the holiness must precede restoration to the blessedness of life ; and that only by being made capable of dwelling beside the presence of the only Wise and Good could man hope to have his portion of felicity recovered. But all this, they further betokened, it was in God's purpose to have accomplished ; and so to do it as at the same time to raise humanity to a higher than its original destination—in its standing nearer to God, and with its powers of life and capacities of working variously ennobled. P. F.

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Four fundamental principles or doctrines are strikingly exhibited by the historical transactions connected with the fall : human guilt and depravity ; God's righteous character and government; His grace necessary to open the door of hope : and finally, the principle of headship, by which the offspring of a common parent were associated in a common ruin, and by which again, under a new and better constitution, the heirs of blessing might be associated in a common restoration. In these elementary

principles, however, we have rather the basis of the patriarchal religion than the religion itself. For this we must look to the symbols and institutions of worship. And as far as appears from the records of that early time, the materials out of which these had at first to be fashioned were: The position assigned to man in respect to the tree of life, the placing before him of the cherubim and the flaming sword at the east of Eden, the covering of his guilt by the sacrifice of animal life, and his still subsisting relation to the day of rest originally hallowed and blessed by God. To this last may be added the marriage relationship; for here also the general principle holds, that no formal change was introduced after the fall, and what was done at the first was virtually done for all times. P. F.

When our first parents left the garden of Eden, they carried with them the promise of a Redeemer, the assurance of the final defeat of the great enemy, as well as the Divine institution of a Sabbath on which to worship, and of the marriage-bond by which to be joined together into families. Thus the foundations of the Christian life in all its bearings were laid in Paradise. A. E.

## Section 27.

### CAIN AND ABEL. BIRTH AND OFFERINGS.

GENESIS 4 : 1–8.

1 AND the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten
2 a man with *the help of* the LORD. And again she bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper
3 of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that
4 Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought
of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to
5 his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth,
6 and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy
7 countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well,
8 sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And
Cain told Abel his brother.

The Book of Genesis, having thus explained the existence of sin on the earth, proceeds to tell of its ravages—murder in the first family—violence overspreading the Old World—a generation of the ungodly swept away by the deluge—sin in Noah's family immediately after the flood—sin in Sodom and Gomorrah—sin in the families of the patriarchs—sin in Canaan, and sin in Egypt - sin in the dwellers in cities, and sin in the dwellers in tents. To multiply gods, to make idols, to dishonor parents, to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, to lie, to covet—the beginnings of all these sins are found written in Genesis. D. F.

Not less brightly did "the heavens declare the glory of God," after the Fall, than they did before. For nine hundred and thirty years did the human eye which had first gazed on Paradise in its primal freshness, and the ear which had there listened to the opening burst of its melodies, continue to be regaled by the same music and the same vernal beauty. Even the "thorn and the thistle" (3 : 13) did not less eloquently speak of the perfections of God, because they served at the same time as memorials of the sin of man. "He left not himself without witness," in that man still found himself in a world, not of mere coincidences, but of speaking signs; a worshipper in a temple whose every object and event possessed a symbolic value, and where the service paused not day nor night. And thus "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world" continued to be "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." The illuminated volume of natural theology continued to invite the attention of mankind till the flood came and quenched in death the eyes that should have read it. J. H.

**1. She bare Cain.** The more generally received doctrine is known as Creationism. Each soul is an immediate work of the Creator: he is perpetually creating souls out of nothing, and infusing them into bodies. He creates each soul at the moment when the body which is destined for it enters really and properly on its

inheritance of life. Creationism recognizes that sense of the immateriality of the human spirit which expressed itself falsely in the doctrine of a pre-existence, and which is so seriously compromised by Traducianism. Personal spirit, it is asserted by the Creationist, cannot be trans mitted from one created life to another, like animal vitality. Yet Creationism recognizes the truth for which the Traducianists contended against the advocates of the soul's pre-existence, when it maintains that the soul and body are strictly contemporaneous in their origin, and that they have profound and ineffaceable relations to each other. H. P. L.

Here the first husband and wife become father and mother. This new relation must be deeply interesting to both, but at first peculiarly so to the mother. Now was begun the fulfilment of the intimations she had received concerning her seed. She was to be the mother of all living. And her seed was to bruise the serpent's head. Her feelings are manifested in the name given to her son and the reason assigned for it. She "bare Cain and said, I have gained a man from Jehovah." The gaining or bearing of the child is evidently the prominent thought in Eve's mind, as she takes the child's name from this. Prompted by her grateful emotion, she confesses her faith. She also employs a new name to designate her maker. In the dialogue with the tempter she had used the word God (Elohim). But now she adopts Jehovah. In this one word she hides a treasure of comfort. "He is true to his promise. He has not forgotten me." M.——The term Jehovah thus employed had special reference to the memorable promise regarding "the seed of the woman," and may indeed be said to originate in the announcement of mercy then made. The name Jehovah had thus a special relation to redemption and the agent through whom the promised deliverance should be accomplished. This is further confirmed by the fact that it is at special epochs in the history of redemption, or in connection with such promises, that it comes most prominently into view ; as in the case of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac, and in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 3 : 14), when the import of this name was so fully revealed. In Eve's case there can be little question that it was in the belief that the previous promise was realized in the birth of Cain. D. M.

**2. His brother Abel.** Abel means *breath, vanity.* Does a sense of the vanity of earthly things grow in the minds of our first parents? Has the mother found her sorrow multiplied? Has she had many daughters between these sons? Is there something delicate and fragile in the appearance of Abel? Has Cain disappointed a mother's hopes? Some of these thoughts may have prompted the name. M.——Two of the children of Adam and Eve are alone mentioned : *Cain* and *Abel.* Not that there were no others, but that the progress of Scripture history is connected with these two. For the Bible does not profess to give a detailed history of the world, nor even a complete biography of those persons whom it introduces. Its object is to set before us a *history of the kingdom of God*, and it only describes such persons and events as is necessary for that purpose. A. E.

**2.** When the two had grown to be men, they chose their callings in life—Cain turning to agriculture ; Abel to a pastoral life. No interval of "utter degeneracy" is sanctioned in the Scripture ac ount of the first men ; no dismal age of living on roots and shell-fish, or the produce of the chase, as naked savages ; they begin in Eden, to work it and watch it ; after the Fall they turn to the tillage of the field and the rearing and tending of sheep ; occupations from which an advance to other forms of civilization was easy. *Geikie.*——In the occupation of these two sons of Adam, we trace the two great branches of productive industry pursued by men in an early stage of society. "Abel was a *keeper* (or feeder) *of sheep*, but Cain was a *tiller of the ground.*" Here are the beginnings of the *pastoral* and *agricultural* modes of life. P. S.—— Man in his primitive state was not a mere gatherer of acorns, a hunter, or a nomad. He began with horticulture, the highest form of rural life. After the fall he descended to the culture of the field and the tending of cattle ; but still he had a home and a settled mode of living. It is only by a third step that he degenerates to the wandering and barbarous state of existence. And only by the predominance of might over right, the selfish lust of power, and the clever combinations of rampant ambition, comes that form of society in which the highest state of barbaric civilization and the lowest depth of bondage and misery meet. M.

**3. In process of time.** As there was a worship appointed before Jehovah's presence, there was also a special sacred time appointed for it ; so that in his cares in tilling the ground and his weariness from having to eat his bread "in the sweat of his brow," the worship should not be neglected. "At the end of days," says the Hebrew, Cain and Abel brought their offerings. When it is remembered that already the seventh day had been ordained of God, even before Eden : that we find the division of time

into periods of seven days universal, though there is no mark in nature, as in the case of days and months and years for such division; and that subsequently the seventh day was thus specially reordained of God, there is no room left for doubt that this "end of days" was the end of the week—the Sabbath day—on which Adam had taught his sons to come for special worship before Jehovah. **An offering unto the Lord.** Unless man had been expressly taught to worship God by sacrifices, why should they have presented themselves before God, each with his offering? What should have induced Cain to bring his "offering," even of the fruits of the earth, unless some Divine order had established the offering as an ordinance of worship? S. R.——The cherubim were located in a particular spot, on the east of the garden of Eden; and as the symbols of God's presence were there, it was only natural that the celebration of divine worship should there also have found its common centre. Hence the two sons of Adam are said to have "*brought* their offerings unto the Lord"—which can scarcely be understood otherwise than as pointing to that particular locality which was hallowed by visible symbols of the Lord's presence, and in the neighborhood of which life and blessing still lingered. P. F.

**Cain, the fruit of the ground. 4. Abel, also the firstlings of his flock.** A gospel had been preached in Eden of a coming Redeemer. A worship had been instituted—a time and place of worship—even before the cherubim and the ineffable brightness at the barred gate of Eden, just as afterward the church worshipped before the cherubim and the brightness upon the mercy-seat. The two sons have been reared under that gospel worship. And now, as representatives of the two great classes into which the race is to be divided—the believers and the unbelieving—they present themselves before Jehovah to worship. There is no wide chasm, ostensibly separating the worshippers any more than in our day between the worshippers according to faith and the worshippers according to reason. Abel, in accordance with his training in the faith, brings his lamb. The apostle declares that it was "by faith" Abel offered the sacrifice and received therein testimony that he was righteous. And Jesus calls him expressly the "righteous Abel;" for he, of all sinners, received the visible assurance of his justification from God. Cain comes also as a worshipper of the same Jehovah at the same time, and, to a large extent, worshipping in the same manner, for in the ritual of worship afterward instituted in the Church, such offering of fruits or corn-sheaves were made a part of the service. Wherein then, the great difference? Just the wide difference that lurks still between the spiritual worship of faith and the worship of rationalism which seems so much the same. The important element in all worship was wanting, the recognition of the great fact of a fallen humanity and of a mediator and atonement for sin. Cain was the first rationalist. Not feeling any burden of sin, not recognizing any fall, he can see no need of any offering of atonement for sin. S. R.

Considered merely as eucharistic offerings, Cain's fruits, the products of his own tillage, were not less appropriate than the firstlings of Abel's flock. The only inference is, that the reason of the Divine preference of Abel's sacrifice lay in its piacular nature; that Cain, though sinful like his brother and needing forgiveness, ignored the awful fact of his guilt, and thus converted his professed homage into an act of impenitence and insult. J. H.——"*By faith* Abel offered unto God." Now the simplest idea of faith, the one element always present in it, is *bowing to God's authority with implicit confidence in his word.* But in this case bowing to God's authority implies that God had given some word in reference to bloody sacrifices—the offering of a lamb by shedding its blood upon the altar. And if God had given any such word of command, it is certainly to be presumed that he had also given at least this general idea, that the blood of the innocent lamb took, in some sense, the place of the blood of the guilty offerer, so that the sacrifice would imply the confession of guilt, and also faith in a bloody substitute of the Lord's own providing. H. C.——"A more excellent sacrifice than Cain," or as Wicklif's translation with more literal exactness renders it, "a much more sacrifice," *i.e.*, a more full or complete sacrifice. Here by declaring the offering of Abel to have been made by faith, the writer teaches by necessary implication that Cain's offering was *not* made by faith, and hence undoubtedly it is that the sacrifice of Abel is said to have been more *full*, *complete*, and *excellent* than Cain's. It was distinguished by a principle which the other lacked. *Bush.*

Cain's was only *a sacrifice of acknowledgment* offered to the Creator: the meat-offerings of *the fruit of the ground* were no more, and might have been offered in innocency: but Abel brought *a sacrifice of atonement*, the blood whereof was shed in order to remission: thereby owning himself a sinner, deprecating God's wrath, and imploring his favor in a Mediator. H.——The fruit of

the soil offered to God is an acknowledgment that the means of this earthly life are due to him. This expresses the barren faith of Cain, but not the living faith of Abel. The latter has entered deeply into the thought that life itself is forfeited to God by transgression, and that only by an act of mercy can the Author of life restore it to the penitent, trusting, submissive, loving heart. He slays the animal as a victim, thereby acknowledging that his life is due for sin ; he offers the life of the animal in token that another life, equivalent to his own, is due to justice if he is to go free by the mercy of God. Such a thought as this is fairly deducible from the facts on the surface of our record. M.—— Cain is presented to our view as a child of nature, not of grace—as one obeying the impulse and direction only of reason, and rejecting the more explicit light of faith as to the kind of service he presented to his Maker. His oblation is an undoubted specimen of what man could do in his fallen state to originate proper ideas of God, and give fitting expression to these in outward acts of worship. But unhappily for the advocates of nature's sufficiency in the matter, it stands condemned in the inspired record as a presumptuous and disallowed act of will-worship. Abel, on the other hand, appears as one who through grace had become a child of faith, and by faith first spiritually discerning the mind of God, then reverently following the course it dictated by presenting that more excellent sacrifice of the firstlings of the flock, with which God was well pleased. P. F.

Here, at the threshold of the development of mankind, we come upon the mystery of 4000 years—the institution of SACRIFICES. What was their origin, and whence the strange accord by which sacrifices are the central point in the religion of all ancient peoples? Manifestly the Biblical record does not give us light on this subject, but at the same time it seems to imply that God had given instructions concerning, and that He had instituted, this ordinance. K.

If we admit that when God had ordained the deliverance of man, he had ordained the means : if we admit that Christ was *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ;* what memorial could be devised more apposite than that of animal sacrifice?—exemplifying, by the slaying of the victim, the death which had been denounced against man's disobedience : thus exhibiting the awful lesson of that death which was the wages of sin, and at the same time representing that death which was actually to be undergone by the Redeemer of mankind ; and hereby connecting in one view the two great cardinal events in the history of man, the FALL, and the RECOVERY : the death denounced against sin, and the death appointed for that Holy One who was to lay down his life to deliver man from the consequences of sin. The institution of animal sacrifice seems then to have contained all the elements of religious knowledge. The adoption of this rite would imply an humble sense of unworthiness of the offerer ; a confession that death, inflicted on the victim, was the desert of transgression ; a reliance upon the promises of deliverance, and an acquiescence in the means for its accomplishment. The sacrifice of Abel was an animal sacrifice. This sacrifice was accepted. The ground of this acceptance was the faith in which it was offered. Scripture assigns no other object of this faith but the promise of a Redeemer : and of this faith the offering of an animal in sacrifice appears to have been the legitimate and consequently the instituted expression. The institution of animal sacrifice, then, was coeval with the fall, and had a reference to the sacrifice of our redemption. And thus SACRIFICE appears to have been ordained *as a standing memorial of the death introduced by sin, and of that death which was to be suffered by the Redeemer. Magee.*

As the promise to Eve was the first dawn of gospel light in prophecy, so the institution of sacrifices was the first hint of it in types. The giving of that promise was the first thing that was done after the fall in Christ's prophetical office ; the institution of sacrifices was the first thing by which especially Christ exhibited himself in his priestly office. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the main of all the Old Testament types of Christ and his redemption ; and it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin ; and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious gospel, that reveals the great sacrifice in the visible church, and not only so, but through the world of mankind. For from this institution of sacrifices all nations derived the custom of sacrificing. *Edwards.*

That sacrifices were not of human invention, but of Divine institution, appears morally certain from such considerations as these : 1. It is not antecedently probable that God would leave man in ignorance of the manner in which he should acceptably worship Him ; and yet the first act of acceptable worship which we find man performing is that of animal sacrifice. 2. This improbability is greatly increased by the fact that God had not only inspired man with hope by the language of promise, but had even

condescended to instruct him to clothe his body with a skin-vesture ; and surely He who thus condescended to meet man's bodily wants would not abandon him to his own inventions respecting the cravings of his higher nature. 3. The *universality* of expiatory offerings proves man's deep consciousness of such a want ; and yet, if they were not divinely appointed, no provision was made to meet the exigence. 4. If God had left man uninstructed, it is not likely that man would have *so early* devised *any* settled method of his own for approaching God ; yet here we find the first members of the first family coming before the Lord with offerings as their *familiar*, *established*, and *only* mode of worship. 5. Of all methods of worship, that of shedding blood—of *sacrificing an animal*—is one of the least likely to have originated in the human mind ; and yet here we find a member of the first family—one who had probably never slaughtered an animal for himself—rejecting the more simple and natural oblation of fruits and flowers, and confidently calculating on pleasing God by putting an animal to death. 6. The *Divine acceptance* of the first sacrifice on record confirms the conviction that the rite was not a human invention, but a Divine appointment. These considerations are confirmed by the *significance* or *symbolical nature* of sacrifice. The fundamental idea of sacrifice cannot be that of a gift merely, as an expression of gratitude. Before Adam sinned he was himself an offering, and hence had no need of an offering. But the union of man's will with the will of God no longer existed ; sin had dissevered it. The only offering which could now be relevant was one in which man might plead guilty to his disturbed relationship with God, and earnestly aim at reparation. Hence the idea lying at the foundation of all sacrificial worship was that of self-surrender, by substitution, and in the hope of pardon—a deep consciousness of having merited the death inflicted on the vicarious animal, and an intense desire that the insulted Deity would accept the immolation as a means of compensation. It was an acted deprecation, for a reason. Springing from the requirements of holiness in the Divine nature, it responded to the cries of conscience in the human nature. The two natures could not be satisfied with less. Deep called unto deep, "without the shedding of blood is no remission of sins." And, hence, the *purest* sacrifice was preferred, not only as the most worthy of the recipient, but also as the furthest removed from the guilty condition of the offerer, and most condemnatory of it ; and the *costliest* sacrifice, as most expressive of the fact that there was nothing which he had not forfeited, and which might not have been demanded ; and the most *voluntary*, as that alone which could express the idea of self-abnegation—of the offerer "divesting himself of his own subjectivity" and surrendering his "innermost" to God ;—all vividly denoting the idea which forms the essence of true religion—the offering up of self—the readjustment once more, by subordination, of our will to the Divine will, and the consequent recovery of a Divine life. Subjectively, then, the institution of sacrifice finds its reason in man's deep consciousness of guilt and desire of reunion with the Supreme will ; and, objectively, in a Divine appointment of holiness and mercy which made such restoration possible. J. H.

**4. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.** Herein are the true footsteps of grace discovered ; the person must be the first in favor of God—the person first, the performance afterward : for though it be true among men that the gift makes way for the acceptance of the person, yet in the order of grace it is after another manner ; for if the person be not first accepted, the offering must be abominable ; for it is not a good work that makes a good man, but a good man makes a good work. The fruit does not make a good tree, but a good tree bringeth forth good fruit. Abel then presented his person and offering, as shrouding both by faith under the righteousness of Christ, which lay wrapped up in the promise ; but Cain stands upon his own righteousness and so presents his offering. Abel therefore is accepted, both his person and offering, while Cain remains accursed. *Bunyan.*

Thenceforth, sacrifice presented after the manner of Abel's might be regarded as of divine authority. Whatever uncertainty might hang around it during the brief space which intervened between the fall and the time of Abel's accepted offering, it was from that time determined to be a mode of worship with which God was well pleased. We might rather say *the* mode of worship ; for sacrifice, accompanied with words of prayer, is the only stated act of worship by which believers in the earlier ages appear to have given formal expression to their faith and hope in God. When it is said of the times of Enos, that "then men began to call upon the name of the Lord," there can be little doubt that they did so after the example of Abel, by the presentation of sacrifice. That sacrifice held the same place in the instituted worship of God after the deluge we learn from the case of Noah, who offered burnt-offerings of

every clean beast and fowl, from which the Lord is said to have smelled a sweet savor. From the time of Abel, then, downward through the whole course of antediluvian and patriarchal history, it appears that the regular and formal worship of God mainly consisted in the offering of sacrifice with the known sanction and virtual appointment of God.

For us, who from the high vantage-ground of a finished redemption can look back upon the temporary institutions that foreshadowed it, there is neither darkness nor uncertainty respecting the prophetic import of the primeval rite of sacrifice. We perceive there in the germ the fundamental truth of that scheme of grace which was to provide for the complete and final restoration of a seed of blessing—the truth of a suffering Mediator, giving His life a ransom for many.

**5. Cain was wroth.** The practical religion generally corresponds with the creed. The amiable offerer of fruits and flowers, with his more gentle conceptions of God, could, notwithstanding, *get very wroth.* So experience has taught the world since. The natural amiableness that demands a soft and soothing view of God, as too good to punish, can yet grow very wroth when the issue comes between its creed and the gospel creed of an atonement. S. R. ——What then was the occasion of this capital malice? Abel's sacrifice is accepted ; what was this to Cain? Cain's is rejected ; how could Abel remedy this? O envy, the corrosive of all ill minds, and the root of all desperate actions : the same cause that moved Satan to tempt the first man to destroy himself and his posterity, moves the second man to destroy the third. It should have been Cain's joy to see his brother accepted ; it should have been his sorrow to see that himself had deserved a rejection ; his brother's example should have excited and directed him. Could Abel have stayed God's fire from descending? Was Cain ever the further from a blessing, because his brother obtained mercy? *Bp. H.*——That envy is most malignant which is like Cain's, who envied his brother because his sacrifice was better accepted, when there was nobody but God to look on. *Bacon.*

**6, 7.** God is here reasoning with Cain, to convince him of the sin and folly of his anger and discontent, and to bring him into a good temper again, that further mischief might be prevented. It is an instance of God's patience and condescending goodness, that he would deal thus tenderly with so bad a man in so bad an affair. *He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* Thus the father of the prodigal argued the case with the elder son. And God with those Israelites, who said, *The way of the Lord is not equal* (Ez. 18 : 25). God puts Cain himself upon inquiring into the cause of his discontent, and considering whether it were indeed a just cause, *Why is thy countenance fallen?* Observe, that God takes notice of all our sinful passions and discontents. There is not an angry look, an envious or a fretful look, that escapes his observing eye. H.

**7. Sin coucheth at the door.** That is to say, the Divine warning to Cain is, that while he is nursing his angry jealous thoughts, Sin, like a ravening beast, as crafty as it is cruel, is crouching outside the door of his heart, only waiting for the door to be opened by any touch of passion to spring in ; and he is admonished to keep the door shut lest he be overcome of evil. *Cox.*——Sin lying at the door is an Eastern figure. Ask a man who is unacquainted with Scripture, what he understands by sin lying at the threshold of the door ; he will immediately speak of it as the guilt of some great crime which the owner had committed. *Roberts.*——"*Sin* lies in ambush, like a wild beast, at the door of thy dwelling, that it may spring upon thee when thou goest forth." When the inward declension from God has taken place, an opportunity only is required in order that "lust, after it has conceived, may bring forth sin ;" and so the sinful desire may break forth into the sinful deed. *Gerl.*——Sin past, in its unrequited and unacknowledged guilt ; sin present, in its dark and stubborn passion and despair ; but, above all, sin future, as the growing habit of a soul that persists in an evil temper, and therefore must add iniquity unto iniquity, is awaiting thee at the door. This dread warning to Cain, expressed in the plainest terms, is a standing lesson for all mankind. Let him who is in the wrong retract at once, and return to God with humble acknowledgment of his own guilt, and unreserved submission to the mercy of his Maker ; for to him who perseveres in sin there can be no hope or help. M.——There is no inexorable destiny, as some falsely assert, which constrains us to anything evil, so long as we do not ourselves will it ; temptation comes no further than the door, if we do not with our own hands remove the bolts. *Van O.*——If sin be harbored in the house, the curse waits at the door, like a bailiff, ready to arrest the sinner whenever he looks out. It lies as if it slept, but it lies at the door where it will soon be awaked, and then it will appear that the damnation slumbered not. Sin will *find thee out* (Num. 32 : 23). H.——God talks with Cain as with a

sullen child ; unriddles to him what slumbers in his heart, and like a beast of prey is lurking at the door. The near approach of sin could not be more truly or more fearfully pictured. And what God did with Cain, that he does with every one, if he will but give heed to his own heart, and to the voice of God. *Herder.*

The moment we let down the standard of Christian action, the moment we mingle with the world as those impelled by no higher and holier purposes, the moment we perform our duties with no thought of their relation to God, that moment we are exposed to fall. The love of gain, an unholy ambition, a selfishness that tramples under foot the rights of our neighbor, or some other of the passions that lie in wait for the defenceless citadel may come in and usurp our best affections, and drive religion from its throne. The true remedy for inconsistent, unfaithful Christians is an immediate and active engagedness in all the duties of religion. If sin has gained possession of thy soul, the only way to drive him from thee is by engaging in those duties of which he shuns the sight ; and feeling "how awful goodness is," he will shrink away and trouble thee no more. *Homer.* —— He who warned Cain that the croucher was at his door, would have helped Cain to repel him. He who warns us that sin is our subtle and implacable antagonist, will help us to detect its wiles and to withstand its assaults. It only needs that Christ show himself on our side, and evil will not court another overthrow. Behold He stands at the door—the door so often opened to the croucher—and knocks : and if any man hear his voice, and open the door, He will come in, treading in the steps of the croucher, and with his pure and blessed feet obliterating the foul tracks of evil, making our purified hearts temples not all unmeet for his presence and service and praise. We have only to bid Him enter, and the victor over sin will give us the victory. *Cox.*

## Section 28.

### CAIN'S FRATRICIDE. PUNISHMENT. DESCENDANTS.

GENESIS 4 : 8–24.

AND it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother,
9 and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I
10 know not : am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy
11 brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now cursed art thou from the ground,
12 which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand ; when thou tillest
the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength ; a fugitive and a wanderer
13 shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I
14 can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground ; and from
thy face shall I be hid ; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth ; and it shall
15 come to pass, that whosoever findeth me shall slay me. And the LORD said unto him, There
fore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him.
16 And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east
17 of Eden. And Cain knew his wife ; and she conceived, and bare Enoch : and he builded a
18 city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was
born Irad : and Irad begat Mehujael : and Mehujael begat Methusael : and Methusael begat
19 Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives : the name of the one was Adah, and the
20 name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal : he was the father of such as dwell in tents
21 and *have* cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal : he was the father of all such as handle
22 the harp and pipe. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, the forger of every cutting instru-

23 ment of brass and iron : and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto
his wives :

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice ; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech :
For I have slain a man for wounding me, and a young man for bruising me :
24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

**8. Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.** The murderous deed of Cain affords a terrible illustration of the words in which the Lord Jesus has taught us, that angry bitter feelings against a brother are in reality murder, showing us what is, so to speak, the full outcome of self-willedness, of anger, envy, and jealousy. A. E.——When they were in the field, and therefore out of view, he rose up against his brother and slew him. The deed is done that cannot be recalled. Selfishness, wounded pride, jealousy, and a guilty conscience were all at work. Here, then, is sin following upon sin, proving the truth of the warning given in the merciful forbearance of God. M.——Of a creature, come fresh, living, and pure from the beneficent Creator's hands, the *least* we *can* think is that there must have been in his soul the principle of all kind affections,—all benevolent sympathies ; a disposition to be happier for the happiness of a kindred being ; a delight in promoting it ; a sense of reciprocal right,—of benevolent justice ; no tincture of a wrongful selfishness ; a state of feeling that would have been struck with horror at the thought of inflicting suffering. Yet in this original family, in the very first degree of the descent, malignity and slaughter began. Men may argue and quibble as long as it will amuse them against our notion of "*the Fall.*"—Here was Fall enough !—and demonstration enough —how deep ! J. F.

This is the first triumph of Satan ; it is not merely *a death* that he has introduced, but a *violent* one, as the first-fruits of sin. It is not the death of an *ordinary* person ; but of the most *holy man* then in being : it is not brought about by the *providence* of God or by a gradual failure and destruction of the earthly fabric, but a violent separation of body and soul : it is not done by a *common enemy*, but by the hand of a *brother ;* and for no other reason than this, the object of his envy was more righteous than himself. Alas ! how exceeding sinful does sin appear in its first manifestation! A. C.——The first man that ever was born is represented as a murderer ; and the first person that ever died, as murdered. These were the effects of Adam's transgression. The guilt of it was manifested in his first-born, and its destructive consequences in his second. *Bp. Conybeare.*

As Abel leads the van in the *noble army of martyrs*, so Cain stands in the front of the *ignoble* army of persecutors (Jude 11). So early did he that was *after the flesh persecute him that was after the spirit ; so it is now*, and so it will be till the war shall end in the eternal salvation of all the saints and the eternal perdition of all that hate them. See what comes of *envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness ;* if they be indulged and cherished in the soul they are in danger of involving men in the guilt of murder itself. Rash anger is heart-murder (Matt. 5 : 21, 22). Much more is malice so ; he that hates his brother is already a murderer before *God :* and if God leave him to himself he wants nothing but an opportunity of being a murderer before the *world*. Many were the aggravations of Cain's sin It was his own brother that he murdered ; his own mother's son, whom he ought to have loved ; his younger brother, whom he ought to have protected. He was a good brother ; one who had never given him the least provocation ; but one whose desire had been always toward him. That which the scripture tells us was the reason for which he slew him was a sufficient aggravation of the murder ; it was *because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous*, so that herein he showed himself to be *of that wicked one* (1 John 3 : 12). In killing his brother he directly struck at God himself ; for God accepting of Abel was the provocation pretended ; and for that very reason he hated Abel, because God loved him. . . . Death reigned ever since Adam sinned, but we read not of any taken captive by him till now ; and now the first that dies is a saint, one that was accepted and beloved of God ; to show that though the promised Seed was so far to destroy him that had the power of death as to save believers from its sting, yet that still they should be exposed to its stroke. The first that went to the grave went to heaven ; God would secure to himself the first-fruits, the first-born to the dead. The first that dies is a martyr and dies for his religion ; and of such it may more truly be said than of soldiers, that they die in the field of honor. Abel's death has not only no curse in it, but it has a crown in it. H.

Who dare measure God's love by outward events, when he sees wicked Cain standing over bleeding Abel ; whose sacrifice was first ac-

cepted, and now himself is sacrificed? Death was denounced to man as a curse; yet, behold, it first lights upon a saint: how soon was it altered by the mercy of that just hand which inflicted it! If death had been evil and life good, Cain had been slain and Abel had survived; now that it begins with him that God loves, "O death, where is thy sting?" *Bp. H.* ——The early death of Abel can be no punishment; he seemed in fact to enjoy the peculiar favor of God; his offering was graciously accepted. We find, therefore, in this narrative the great and beautiful thought, that life is not the highest boon; that the pious find a better existence and a more blessed reward in another and a purer sphere; but that crime and guilt are the greatest evils; that they are punished by a long and wearisome life, full of fear and care and compunction of conscience. *Kalisch.*

We cannot conceive that the circumstances attending this first infliction of death upon man could have been ordered by providence so as to testify more plainly the great truth of a *future state of recompense*, had this been the sole purpose for which they were designed. To conceive that a just and merciful God should openly approve the sacrifice of Abel, and yet permit him, in consequence of that very action, to suffer a cruel death, which put a final period to his existence; while his murderer, whom the same God openly condemned, was yet permitted to live; all this is so contradictory to the divine attributes, as to prove beyond possibility of doubt that this event was permitted to take place, partly at least, in order to show that death was not a final extinction of being, but a passage from this world to another where the righteous should be recompensed for their adherence to the will of their heavenly father, in opposition to suffering and death, by a sure and eternal reward. *Graves.*——The patriarchs before and after Job, and the Israelites before Christ, had a notion of a future state. By sacrifices was plainly shown that a way was open to the divine favor and acceptance; and the favor of God imports happiness; which to Abel, who because he was accepted of God was unjustly slain, could be only in a future state; and dying on account of that faith "he speaketh" an invisible future state of reward. *Bp. Taylor.*——It is clearly expressed in the Pentateuch that *the relation of the righteous to God is not cancelled after death.* The blood of the murdered Abel cries to God. The relation into which God entered with the patriarchs continues; for, long after the patriarchs had fallen asleep, he calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "But God is not a God of the dead, but of the living." To him who has an eternal value for God an eternal existence is assured. O.

**9. Where is Abel thy brother?** This reminds us of the question put to the hiding Adam, "Where art thou?" It is calculated to strike the conscience. The reply is different from that of Adam. The sin has now advanced from hasty, incautious yielding to the tempter, to reiterated and deliberate disobedience. Such a sinner *must* take different ground. Cain, therefore, attempts to parry the question, apparently on the vain supposition that no eye, not even that of the All-seeing, was present to witness the deed. "I know not." In the madness of his confusion he goes further. He disputes the right of the Almighty to make the demand. "Am I my brother's keeper?" There is, as usual, an atom of truth mingled with the amazing falsehood of this response. No man is the absolute keeper of his brother, so as to be responsible for his safety when he is not present. This is what Cain means to insinuate. But every man is his brother's keeper so far that he is not himself to lay the hand of violence on him, nor suffer another to do so if he can hinder it. This sort of keeping the Almighty has a right to demand of every one,—the first part of it on the ground of mere justice, the second on that of love. But Cain's reply betrays a desperate resort to falsehood, a total estrangement of feeling, a quenching of brotherly love, a predominance of that selfishness which freezes affection and kindles hatred. This is the way of Cain (Jude 11). M.——Those are strangely blind that think it possible to conceal their sins from a God that sees all; and those are strangely hard that think it desirable to conceal them from a God who pardons those only that confess. He impudently charges his Judge with folly and injustice, in putting this question to him, *Am I my brother's keeper?* H.——We see here, in the sin and in the defiant, hardened state after its completion, as in comparison with Adam's, the progress of corruption. *Gerl.* ——For this complication of crimes, *envy*, which led him to *murder* his brother, and then to attempt to hide it by a *lie*, and by an insolent *rebellious* answer to God, Cain is styled in the New Testament, a child "of that wicked one" (1 John 3:12), as imitating his works, who through *envy* seduced our first parents, and was a "liar" and a "murderer" from the beginning. *Hales.*

With regard to worldly concerns, men are proud to acknowledge their power over each other; they make it their boast. But go to such

a boaster and ask him what he has done for the souls of his fellow-men ; whether he has ever communicated one spiritual truth ; whether there has been a religious power speaking forth from his life ; whether, in short, the world is any better for his living in it ; and he will start from you with surprise, and the language you read in his perturbed countenance is, "Am I my brother's keeper?" *Homer.*

**11. Cursed art thou.** The first record of justice that was in the world was a judgment upon a murderer, in the person of Adam's first-born, Cain ; and though it was not punished by death, but with banishment and mark of ignominy, in respect of the primogeniture or population of the world or other points of God's secret decree, yet it was judged, and was the first record of justice. *Bacon.*——The curse of Adam's disobedience terminated on the ground, *Cursed is the ground for thy sake ;* but that for Cain's rebellion fell immediately upon himself, *Thou art cursed.* The wickedness of the wicked brings a curse upon all they do, and all they have, and that curse embitters all they have, and disappoints them in all they do. H.

**14. From the face of the land.** The home of his childhood and his fathers. *From thy face shall I be hid.* That is, from the place of God's special presence, from the seat of his worship, from the habitation of his Shechinah, from the society of his father and family, and consequently from the only church which God then had upon earth. It was therefore a virtual excommunication from the highest religious privileges which could then be enjoyed. If this be the import of the words (and we know of none so probable), it implies that the worship of God was there kept up, and that God was with them. *Bush.*—— *Every one that findeth me shall slay me.* To the lawless, vindictive Cain, nothing would be more natural than the thought that somewhere in the unknown waste there might be beings like himself, and who might be as malignant to him as he had been to his slain brother. We may say, too, that Cain's awful guilt gave a preternatural power to his imagination. T. L.

It is clear from the language of the fratricide, that communion with God had been hitherto maintained in a given locality—that in that scene of the Shechinah Cain now expected his complaint to be heard and answered, but that, if exiled beyond its precincts, he should be driven forth beyond the circle sacred to the worship of God, and to the visible displays of His presence. Upward of a century had then elapsed from the hour of the Fall, and numerous children had probably been born meanwhile, and here, during the long interval, God had graciously met with His first human worshippers, "from between the cherubim," and "communed with" them. J. H.

According to hints gathered from ver. 25, the murder of Abel probably took place just before the birth of Seth, *i.e.*, 130 years after the creation of man. We need not suppose that Cain, Abel, and Seth were the only sons of Adam. From Gen. 5 : 4, we infer that there were others. Cain, Abel, and Seth are mentioned for obvious reasons ; Abel for his piety and his early death, Cain for his wickedness and the worldly wisdom of his posterity, Seth because he was the ancestor of the promised seed. There may then, in 130 years, have grown up a very considerable number of children and grandchildren to Adam and Eve. E. H. B.—— Cain and Abel may have had a considerable number of children and grandchildren at this time ; and allowing for other possible children of Adam and Eve, there must have been at the time a considerable number of persons in the world—quite sufficient to account for Cain's dread of being slain for the murder of Abel ; and also for his building a city soon after his migration. *Kit.*

**14. Whosoever findeth me shall slay me.** He that feared not to kill his brother, fears now that whosoever meets him will kill him. The troubled conscience projecteth fearful things, and sin makes even cruel men cowardly. How bitter is the end of sin, yea, without end! Cain finds that he killed himself more than his brother. We should never sin if our foresight were but as good as our sense : the issue of sin would appear a thousand times more horrible than the act is pleasant. *Bp. H.*——And in the remorse and terror that weighed him down and chased him through the land of "wandering," haunted by the presence of God and the threatening spectral hand of man, and that made him build his fenced city or stronghold, like some mediæval robber's castle, we read by anticipation the vivid pictures of the masters of tragedy and romance, or the facts of actual occurrence. S. C. B.——Mr. Webster, in the trial of the Knapps, described not the extraordinary, but the normal and ordinary workings of conscience in all ages, and for all crimes. "He had done the murder. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe. Ah, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the

guilty can bestow it and say it is safe. True, it is, that, generally speaking, 'murder will out.' Every murderer, like the first one, feels that every man's hand is against him. The guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It must be confessed. It will be confessed. There is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession." *Townsend.*

**15.** We are to bear in mind that God still held the sword of justice in his own immediate hands, and had not delegated his authority to any human tribunal. It is plain that no man has an inherent right to inflict the sanction of a broken law on the transgressor. This right belongs to the Creator, and derivatively only to those whom he has intrusted with the dispensation of civil government according to established laws. The whole dealing of the Almighty was calculated to have a softening, conscience-awakening, and hope-inspiring effect on the murderer's heart. M.

The Lord declares that if any one should follow Cain's example, he shall incur a far heavier penalty, as he ought to have been taught by him how horrible the crime was in God's sight.——**Appointed a sign.** Not put a mark on him, but He gave him a sign as a pledge of His promise, by means of which Cain gained confidence, and felt himself secure notwithstanding his banishment. *Gerl.*——Accordingly it is well rendered in the Greek, "God set a sign before Cain to persuade him that whosoever should find him should not kill him." As to its being a visible mark, brand, or stigma affixed to his person, there is no ground whatever for such an opinion. *Bush.*

The rejection of Cain and the acceptance of Abel was a rehearsal, in the morning of time, of the final judgment. "This (says F. von Schlegel) is the leading subject of primitive history—the struggle between two races—the first great event in universal history." It commenced the grand classification of mankind; and implied that all other distinctions are to be merged in the two great classes of the obedient and the disobedient. J. H.

**16. Went out from the presence of the Lord.** The story of Cain is the story of all ages. Sin, suffering; the one following the other by a law fixed and imperative like that by which pain agonizes a burning hand. So far as the narrative informs us, the suffering of the first murderer was mental suffering. Disease did not blast him, chains did not bind him. He went his way like other men. He had sons and daughters; he built the first city known in history. Tradition says that he founded many cities and became the head of a great empire. Yet Cain lived a life of conscious curse. The serpents coiled within. Cursed in thought and in feeling, cursed in fears and in blasted hopes, cursed in one long despair: such was life to the first man who bore the fruit of the first matured and ripened sin. And such will be the life of the last man who shall go out from the presence of the Lord, bearing the burden of a finished crime unrepented of and unforgiven. *Phelps.*

**16. Went from the presence of the Lord.** Signifies going away from the visible symbol of Divine presence in the Cherubim and the brightness as of a gleaming sword, and from the society of the worshippers of Jehovah. In this Cherubim and brightness set up at the east of Eden is the original of the Shechinah of the dispensation of Moses; the symbol of the Divine presence, as seen in the visions of David and Ezekiel, all of which reappear in the visions of John through "the door opened in heaven," where the four living creatures that stand around the throne about which are the four and twenty elders and those countless myriads of worshippers who sing "salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." It is of special interest, and it throws important light on some of the more intricate portions of the Word of God, to mark this identity of outward worship through the history from the dawn of time onward into the heart of the eternity to come. At the same time this marked identity between the first worship and all succeeding worships reflects light upon this saying: "Went out from the presence of Jehovah." It shows that it signified a going forth, as an apostate wanderer, from the society that "called upon the name of the Lord." The *conflict* began between the two men first born of the earth, according to the prediction, becomes a *conflict of races*, on through successive generations, till the earth, brought under the dominion of the seed of the devil, all, save a single family, is swept away by the waters of vengeance. S. R.——Cain departed from God and seemed to get on well for a while. He built cities, sought out many inventions, his family prospered in the world: their whole life seemed to show how well man can get on without God. And the end of it was "the flood came," and "they were drowned." *An.*

**17. He builded a city.** This furnishes

evidence that houses were earlier than tents, towns than encampments, and the settled than the nomad life. The origin of the tent-dwelling life is afterward ascribed to a period long subsequent—the fifth generation from Cain. This is not in accordance with the hypothesis of those who contend that man advanced progressively out of the savage state. In the true record, the first-born man builds a city, and the tent comes later by more than a thousand years. *Kit.*——The first men were not wandering and ignorant savages, although those who wandered from the parent stock and ceased to have any connection with it, generally fell into a state of barbarism and ignorance. Science, arts, and civilization were confined to those who maintained their connection with the central stock of the first men, or departed in numbers sufficient to enable them to exercise and carry along with them the subdivisions of art and labor necessary to civilized life. *R. Forsyth.*

**19-24.** The posterity of Cain follow in the course of estrangement from God on which their ancestor had entered. They invent arts, and they devise the pleasures of life. The Cainite *Lamech* introduces polygamy, and boastingly confides in his own strength, as in his God. His son *Jabal* was the ancestor of the nomadic tribes which dwell in tents. *Jabal* invented stringed and wind instruments, *Tubal-Cain* was "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." These statements, as well as the names of his daughter *Naamah* (the lovely), and of his wives *Adah* (ornament, beauty), and *Zillah* (shade), furnish abundant indications of the peculiar development in the family of Cain. K.

Cain's tendency to trust in his own wit and strength, rather than in the Divine goodness which even his sin could not alienate, rose to its full height in Lamech and his family ; the intermediate steps of the progress being passed over by the sacred historian in the case of the Cainites as in that of the Sethites. Lamech is the seventh from Adam through Cain, just as Enoch is seventh from Adam through Seth ; and as in Enoch the characteristics of the line of Seth came to a head, so also the characteristics of the line of Cain came to a head in Lamech and his children. They invent the arts, but they also serve the lusts of the flesh. While the Sethites rise into "sons of God," the Cainites, despite their grand gifts, sink into mere "children of men." *Cox.*

**19. Lamech took unto him two wives.** The first example of polygamy. The origin of this institution is consequently carried back to the race of the accursed one, and placed at the eve of the Deluge, when "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." As Knobel has rightly acknowledged, there is here a formal condemnation of polygamy, just as the words of Gen. 2 : 24 give a divine sanction to monogamy. *Lenormant.*——He is the first of the human race who had more wives than one. The father of a family of inventors, this was his invention, his legacy, to the human race—a legacy which perhaps the larger half of men still inherit, to their cost and ours. *Cox.*——Polygamy was an infraction of a natural appointment. The inequality which it produced in the distribution of the sex ; the distraction of affection ; the domestic jealousies ; the degradation of the woman ; the prison-like surveillance of her movements thus made necessary ; the diminished number of healthy children resulting from such concubinage ; and their necessary want of parental education—all proclaim that polygamy is a violation of the domestic constitution. The most favorable circumstances in which such an experiment could be made was in Patriarchal times. But those are the very times which denote that in no case can the Divine arrangement on the subject be departed from with impunity. Indeed, the first reference to the evil, in the fragmentary allusion to antediluvian Lamech, is of a kind ominous of a train of alarming results. J. H.

In Lamech we have only the extreme type of a large class,—men who take the sensuous view of life. These are they who, without intentional or deliberate wickedness perhaps, forget God, or quietly and habitually ignore him ; whose real trust is in their own strength and wit ; who believe wisdom to be a defence, and wealth a defence, and trained and organized power a defence, and that they need not go beyond these. They are sufficient to themselves, whether in the toil and conflict of life, or in its hours of ease and relaxation. They can find all the delights they need in music, or poetry, or some of the kindred arts which wait to minister at their call ; and they never or rarely rise beyond these, never taste the joys of a spiritual communion with God, or look forward with desire to the services and felicities of the heavenly world. *Cox.*

**20. Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents.** A proof that this was not the primitive manner of life. Contrary to the pagan notion, that man commenced life on the earth as a savage, we here see that he has to retrograde in order to approach that condition. Nor, indeed, have we any trace of the strictly savage or hunting condition of life, until after

the Deluge. In the conduct of Jabal, however, who introduced or promoted the change from a settled to a wandering life, we see the way in which a course of retrogradation might easily begin. J. H.——Man had existed thirteen centuries upon the earth before the nomad life began. In Jabal's time men were taught to cast off the restraints of living in towns and villages, and to betake themselves wholly to pastures, dwelling in portable habitations, and removing from place to place for the convenience of pasturage. This is a mode of life frequently brought under our notice in the Scriptures, being essentially that of the patriarchs whose history occupies the greater portion of the book of Genesis. *Kil.*

**21.** *Jubal* appears as the ancestor of those who handle the stringed and wind instruments. It is remarkable how far back in antiquity we encounter musical instruments, and that too in great variety. We cannot find their origin, but they meet us in the full stream. Egypt furnishes both the oldest and most abundant exhibition. "Paintings on the tombs of the earliest times" exhibit their fondness for instrumental music, which blossomed out into a singular variety of instruments. They had their drums, their tambourines of three kinds, clappers, cymbals and trumpets, flutes of reed, wood, bone and ivory, single pipes with three and with four holes, double pipes, and stringed instruments of much greater variety in form and number of strings than are in modern use. Thus the stringed and wind instruments of music antedate all other history than that of the Pentateuch.

**22.** The third of this family group, *Tubal-Cain*, was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron," or as most modern scholars render it, substantially, a "forger of all tools (or implements) of brass and iron." Here we strike the origin of metallurgy, especially the working of brass—or rather bronze or copper—and iron. It is noteworthy that early researches bring us very little of pure copper; but the main supply of metallic implements is of bronze, a compound of copper and tin. Copper is comparatively fusible and malleable, and is found in combinations much more manageable than iron, and is abundant in the region of Armenia and the neighboring countries. Bronze abounds in Egypt from the earliest times, a cast cylinder bearing the name of Pepi of the sixth dynasty However far back of the confines of all recorded history except this Pentateuch we go, we encounter bronze coming down from beyond in comparative abundance as one of the very earliest forms of metallurgy, and in the very regions to which it is assigned, and where it is still to be found. S. C. B.

A rarely gifted family this, a family to which all the world owes an enormous debt to this very day; and yet a wicked family—forgetting God, and relying on their own great wit and strength. We need to remember that, and to learn from it that there is no necessary connection between gifts and goodness. But we should also mark how frank and honest a book the Bible is. It brands the children of Cain as the ungodly race: but it tells us how splendidly they were endowed, how much we owe them. Let us mark, too, how even ungodly men may serve their race and be God's instruments for good, inventing arts which in purer hands become most helpful and ennobling. *Cox.*——The scope of this notice of the Cainite race seems to be to represent them as advancing in all worldly arts and arms, and becoming exceedingly prosperous on earth: but unconnected with the worship of Jehovah. The race are never named after this chapter. *Alf.*

**23, 24.** *The song of Lamech.* It is in connection with the later development of evil in the Cainites that Lamech's song is introduced, and with special reference to that portion of his family who were makers of instruments in brass and iron—instruments chiefly of a warlike kind. It is only by viewing the song in that connection that we perceive its full meaning and its proper place, as intended to indicate that the evil was approaching its final stage. He means apparently, that with such weapons as he had now at command he could execute at will deeds of retaliation and slaughter. So that his song may be regarded "as an ode of triumph on the invention of the sword. He can provide more amply for his own protection than God did for Cain's; and he congratulates his wives on being the mothers of such sons. Thus the history of the Cainites began with a deed of murder, and here it ends with a song of murder." (*Drechsler.*) P. F.

In this is uttered that Titanic haughtiness of which it is said (Hab. 1 : 11) that his strength is his God, and (Job 12 : 6) that he carries his God, namely his sword, in his fist. *Delit.*——As it was a sword-song, so was it a blood-song, an utterance of "titanic insolence" and ferocity. It well illustrates how polygamy and cruelty, lust and fierceness go hand in hand, and how the antediluvian chivalry that could name its women, "Shade" and "Beauty" and "Pleasantness," and sing to them poetic strains, could summon them to witness its ruthless revenge.

In it lay already the expression of the spirit that soon filled the world with violence, and called imperatively for that later edict of God, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." S. C. B.

This short ode has all the characteristics of the most perfect Hebrew poetry. Every pair of lines is a specimen of the Hebrew parallelism, the second member reiterating with emphasis the first. The line of Cain is traced only to the seventh generation, and thus far in order to point out the origin of the arts of life. M.

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From the whole narrative it may be confidently inferred, that the descendants of Cain were endowed with a superior genius, and were the first who made themselves celebrated by the discovery and improvements of arts and sciences. Superior genius, united with extraordinary attainments, are, in themselves, valuable gifts ; but when they are dissevered from the fear of God, nothing tends more powerfully to intoxicate and corrupt the heart. These envenom it with pride, supply the sophistry which supports impiety, and extend the means and enlarge the capacity of doing mischief. They have a peculiar tendency to produce that confidence in human reason, that reliance on arms of flesh, which indisposes man to seek after God. *R. Hall.*

Every step in material civilization was a step onward in evil. Not, indeed, that this was a necessary result ; but just because that *material* progress, instead of being put under moral control, was placed in antagonism to it. The "fruit of the vine" became the means of intemperance. The fine arts, as far as they were practised, pandered to the passions ; and even if they refined them, procured for their indulgence softer names than before, under which they might be followed with greater impunity. The products of a new territory ministered to luxury, and led to wars for its possession. Wealth became equivalent to vice ; and power to oppression. And thus, after ages of growing degeneracy, the antediluvians illustrated the truth, so often exemplified since, that, in the absence of moral principle, it is not only possible, but certain, that people will reach the highest point of material civilization, and the lowest point of social demoralization at the same time. J. H.

It is no uncommon thing in our day to hear extravagant eulogies of a certain materialistic civilization—of inventions, of arts, of material wealth and luxury—which is to sweep before it all inferior civilization, and whose "manifest destiny" is to reign supreme all over the continent. It is, however, curious, as well as sad, to see how precisely this civilization seems to run in the line of the high civilization of Cain's family ; how as it advances it becomes more godless ; how it learns by the logic of Lamech to reason away all fear of the penalty of sin ; how it loses sight of all the profound truths taught directly by Jehovah, when of old its ancestry stood yet in the presence of Jehovah ; and how in its impious effrontery and giant wickedness it provokes the Almighty to sweep it off the earth as a filthy nuisance. Now let it be borne in mind that all civilizations that "go out from the presence of God" are not such as suit the true interests of man the sinner. His civilization is divinely ordained to him. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." S. R.

It is very remarkable that we perceive in the Cainite race those very things which afterward formed the characteristics of heathenism, as we find it among the most advanced nations of antiquity, such as Greece and Rome. Over their family-life might be written, as it were, the names Adah, Zillah, Naamah ; over their civil life the "sword-song of Lamech," which indeed strikes the key-note of ancient heathen society ; and over their culture and pursuits, the abstract of the biographies which Scripture furnishes us of the descendants of Cain. And as their lives have been buried in the flood, so has a great flood also swept away heathenism—its life, culture, and civilization from the earth, and only left on the mountain-top that ark into which God had shut up them who believed His warnings and His promises. A. E.

# Section 29.

## ADAM TO NOAH.

GENESIS 4 : 25, 26 ; 5 : 1–32.

4 : 25 AND Adam knew his wife again ; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth : For,
26 *said she,* God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel ; for Cain slew him. And
to Seth, to him also there was born a son ; and he called his name Enosh : then began men
to call upon the name of the LORD.
5 : 1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the
2 likeness of God made he him ; male and female created he them ; and blessed them, and
3 called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred
and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image ; and called his name
4 Seth : and the days of Adam after he begat Seth were eight hundred years : and he begat
5 sons and daughters. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty
6 years : and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enosh : and
7 Seth lived after he begat Enosh eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and
8 daughters : and all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years : and he died,
9 And Enosh lived ninety years, and begat Kenan : and Enosh lived after he begat Kenan
10 eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters : and all the days of Enosh
11 were nine hundred and five years : and he died. And Kenan lived seventy years, and
12 begat Mahalalel : and Kenan lived after he begat Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years,
13 and begat sons and daughters : and all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years :
14 and he died. And Mahalalel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared : and Mahalalel
15 lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters :
16 and all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety and five years : and he died.
17 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and begat Enoch : and Jared lived after
18 he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters : and all the days of
19 Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years : and he died. And Enoch lived sixty and
20 five years, and begat Methuselah : and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah
21 three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters : and all the days of Enoch were three
22 hundred sixty and five years : and Enoch walked with God : and he was not ; for God
23 took him. And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech :
24 and Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat
25 sons and daughters : and all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine
26 years : and he died. And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a
27 son : and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us for our work and
28 for the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. And
29 Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and
30 daughters : and all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years : and
31 he died.
32 And Noah was five hundred years old : and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**4 : 25. For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel.** He is to be instead of Abel, and God-fearing like Abel. She receives this gift from God, and in faith expects him to be the seed of God, the parent of a godly race. Her faith was not disappointed. His descendants earn the name of the sons of God. As the ungodly are called the seed of the serpent, because they are of his spirit, so the godly are designated the seed of God, because they are of God's Spirit. The Spirit of God strives and rules in them, and so they are, in the graphic language of Scripture, the sons of God (6 : 1). M.——Now first, the law of primogeniture—so often afterward set aside by the Divine choice of a younger son—was disparaged in the rejection of the first-born, Cain. The adoption of Abel and of Seth in his stead was the Divine inauguration of character to the highest distinctions in the kingdom of God. J. H.

The brief notices of antediluvian history are evidently framed for the purpose of exhibiting the antagonistic state and tendencies of these

two seeds, and of rendering manifest the mighty difference which God's work of grace was destined to make in the character and prospects of man. The name given by Eve to her third son, with the reason assigned for it, bespoke the insight the common mother of mankind had now obtained into this mournful division in her offspring. Cain seems now to her view to stand at the head of a God-opposing interest in the world ; and God is seen mercifully providing another in its room. P. F.

**26. To Seth was born a son.** Seth is the ancestor of a family, which, continuing in the faith, become heirs of the promise, and whose aims, character, and tendency are in direct contrast to those of Cain. The separation of the race into Sethites and Cainites was not stopped by the circumstance that Adam begat many other sons and daughters. According to their respective tendencies, these would join either the one or the other party. K.—— From the creation of man to the destruction of men by the Flood the current of human history flows in two main streams, streams which run apart for seven generations, and then commingle only to fall and be lost in the cavern of a common doom. On the one hand, we have the Cainites, that is, Cain and his descendants, busily occupied with the arts and inventions of life ; and, on the other hand, we have the Sethites, that is, Seth and his descendants, who remain "upright" in the Biblical sense, and do not seek out inventions, who hold fast their allegiance to God, and live the simple orderly life He ordained for primitive man. *Cox* ——Nothing can be more natural or probable than the difference of character and development in the descendants of Cain and Seth respectively. In the former we see the children of this world wise in their generation, rapidly advancing in art and the acquirement of riches, but sensual, violent and godless. In the latter we find less of social and political advancement, but a life more regulated by the dictates of conscience and by faith in the Providence and Grace of God. E. H. B.

Especially does this vital difference between the two races appear in the words which follow upon the notice of Enos' birth : "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." It cannot be supposed that before that time prayer and the praise of God had been wholly unknown in the earth. Even the sacrifices of Cain and of Abel prove the contrary. It must therefore mean, that the vital difference which had all along existed between the two races, became now also outwardly manifest by a distinct and open profession, and by the praise of God on the part of the Sethites. A. E.——This expression refers to the first institution of the regular, solemn, public worship of Jehovah. K.—— Growing man now comprehends all that is implied in the proper name of God, *Jehovah*, the author of being, of promise, and of performance. The new form of worship attracts the attention of the early world, and the record is made, "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah," that keepeth covenant and mercy. M.

An altar of stones or of turf, on which the gifts from the field or from the sheepfold were deposited, and beside which stood the father of the family as priest, setting forth with reverence the majesty and the glory of God ; the household around him listen to the narrative of the marvels of creation, the blessedness of paradise, the origin and the result of sin ; and then perchance their lips send forth a song of praise,—see here the outlines of the first worship of God, not instituted, but born of the inmost impulse of the heart. The calling on the name of the Lord, of course not with the lips alone, but with a heart turned toward him ; adoration and thanksgiving with a heavenward glance, in which nothing less than the whole soul is placed ; mutual fellowship, in which he is himself the living centre : see here the characteristics of the worshipper such as the Father seeks. Van O.——Now, that Cain and those who had deserted religion had built a city and begun to declare for impiety and irreligion, and called themselves the *Sons of men ;* those that adhered to God began to declare for him and his worship, and called themselves the *Sons of God.* Now began the distinction between professors and profane, which has been kept up ever since and will be while the world stands. H.

**5 : 1–3.** Both Adam and Eve are associated with this seed of blessing. "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth ;"—as if his progeny before this were not to be reckoned—the child of grace had perished, and the other in a spiritual sense was not. Adam, therefore, is here distinctly placed at the head of a spiritual offspring—himself, with his partner, the first link in the grand chain of blessing. And the likeness in which he begat his son—"his own image"—must not be limited to the corruption that now marred the purity of his nature—as if *his* image stood simply in contrast to God's. It is as the parental head of the whole lineage of believers that he is represented, and such a sharp con-

trast would here especially be out of place. P. F.——God in His infinite grace now opened to man another path. He set before him the hope of faith. All who rejected this hope would naturally choose the world as it was; and, satisfied therewith, try to establish themselves in the earth, claim it as their own, enjoy its pleasures and lusts, and cultivate its arts. On the other hand, one who embraced the promises would consider himself a pilgrim and a stranger in this earth, and both in heart and outward conduct show that he believed in and waited for the fulfilment of the promise. The one describes the history of Cain and of his race; the other that of Abel, and afterward of Seth and of his descendants For around these two—Cain and Seth—as their representatives, *all the children of Adam* would group themselves according to their spiritual tendencies. A. E.

**The book of the generations of Adam.** This section is the groundwork of all attempts to frame a chronology of the antediluvian period, but is obviously unfitted for this purpose; for it has come down to us in three shapes, of which the Samaritan makes the space from Adam to the flood 1307 years, the Hebrew text in its present form 1656, and the Greek text of the Septuagint 2262 years. Which of these texts is of primary authority, no living scholar would venture to say. The object of the section, besides giving us the genealogy of the Messiah, is to introduce the account of the general corruption of mankind leading on to the flood. R. P. S.

We now enter upon the *third* of the larger documents contained in Genesis. The first is a diary, the second is a history, the third a genealogy. This chapter contains the line from Adam to Noah, in which are stated some common particulars concerning all, and certain special details concerning three of them. The genealogy is traced to the tenth in descent from Adam, and terminates with the flood. The scope of the chapter is to mark out the line of faith and hope and holiness from Adam, the first head of the human race, to Noah, who became eventually the second natural head of it. M.

**3.** Here commences the series of genealogical tables, which, though interrupted by the narrative, is continued throughout this book in such a manner as to make up a regularly connected chain. These genealogical tables form the outward framework on which the history is built, and which consists for the most part of mere names, during a period of more than 1500 years. This is all, together with a few fragmentary notices, which remains to us of the history before the flood,—just as in our life the comparatively long period of childhood is lost in oblivion. We have here the genealogical table of the family in which was preserved the pure knowledge of God. *Gerl.*

The genealogy given is that of the Sethites, probably as the line of the promised seed The genealogy of the Cainites was given much more imperfectly in the last chapter, and with no dates or chronological marks, because, says Keil, being under the curse of God, they had no future. He quotes Baumgarten as saying, that this genealogy was "a memorial witnessing both the truth of God's promises and also the faith and patience of the fathers." The chronology of this chapter is very different in the Hebrew and the Septuagint, as will be seen in the following table of the generations from Adam to the flood. E. H. B.

| | Hebrew Text. | | Septuagint. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Years before birth of Son. | Whole Life. | Years before birth of Son. | Whole Life. |
| Adam | 130 | 930 | 230 | 930 |
| Seth | 105 | 912 | 205 | 912 |
| Enosh | 90 | 905 | 190 | 905 |
| Cainan | 70 | 910 | 170 | 910 |
| Mahalalel | 65 | 895 | 65 | 895 |
| Jared | 162 | 962 | 62 | 962 |
| Enoch | 65 | 365 | 165 | 365 |
| Methuselah | 187 | 969 | 187 | 969 |
| Lamech | 182 | 777 | 188 | 753 |
| Noah | 500 | | 500 | |
| Shem at the Flood | 100 | | 100 | |
| Date of Flood | 1,656 | | 2,262 | |

[The LXX., or Septuagint, is the name of a Greek version of the Old Testament, supposed to be the work of seventy-two Jews, who are usually called, in a round number, the *Seventy*, and who made this version at the desire of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 200 years before Christ. Christ and his Apostles usually quote from this version.]

The brevity of the historical narrative, and the fewness of the generations which cover the space of time, tend to prevent us from realizing with distinctness the great duration of the period between the creation and the flood. But it was a period of great increase of population —of large improvement in the arts—of terrible conflicts—of gigantic crimes—of extraordinary virtues—of miraculous interpositions—all of which are dimly hinted at in the Divine record. Through the whole runs the great fact of the longevity of the generations before the flood—

which connected by so few living links the extremities of this long period of time, and which must have produced conditions of human experience materially different from those which our brief space of existence enables us to realize. *Kit.*

I have, for witnesses to what I have said respecting the great length of patriarchal life, all those who have written antiquities, both among the Greeks and Barbarians; for even Manetho, who wrote the Egyptian history, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean monuments, and Mochus, and Hestiæus, and those who composed the Phœnician history, agree to what I here say; Hesiod, also, and Hecatæus, Hellanicus, and Acusilaus; and besides these, Ephorus and Nicolaus, relate that the ancients lived a thousand years. *Josephus.*

The divine revelations and the facts of history in these early ages might be transmitted with perfect safety, inasmuch as during an interval of 2000 years from Adam to Abraham, they required to pass through the mouth of only two witnesses: Methuselah, the eighth from Adam, lived almost 100 years contemporaneously with him, while Noah was on the earth eighty-four years along with Enos the grandson of Adam, and downward 128 years with Terah the father of Abraham. It was thus possible for Noah to converse with six successive members of the race before him, as well as with nine generations after him, and so to communicate to them orally all that he had himself experienced, as well as what had been transmitted to him by the fathers. C. G. B.——It was easy for Moses to be satisfied of the truth of all he relates in the Book of Genesis, as the accounts came to him through the medium of very few persons. From Adam to Noah there was but *one* man necessary to the transmission of the history of this period. Adam and Lamech were contemporaries for fifty-six years. Methusaleh, the grandfather of Noah, lived to see both Adam and Lamech, and was likewise contemporary with Noah for 600 years. In like manner Shem connected Noah and Abraham, having lived to converse with both; as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to Moses. *Horne.*

The antediluvian origin of alphabetic writing is thought to be probable from reasons such as these:—That the genealogies of the patriarchs are recorded with an exactness superior to that of tradition: that the poetical address of Lamech possesses no internal recommendation to be preserved during a tract of centuries by tradition, and "yet differs essentially from all the specimens of known ideographic poetry:" that the Mosiac account of the Flood has the air of a description derived from an eye-witness, or placed on record by him: that the formulæ, "This is the book of the generations of Adam," and "These are the generations of Noah," imply a transcript from authentic genealogical tables regularly kept in the patriarchal families: that the earlier part of the Book of Genesis is marked by differences of style denoting distinct compositions, from which Moses, under Divine direction, compiled his history, and that these archives were authentic memorials of and from antediluvian families: that (even supposing alphabetic signs were not the result of Divine suggestion like articulate sounds) the longevity of the antediluvians was highly favorable to the discovery; and that it is favored by the traditions of the most widely separated nations, and by almost all religions. J. H.

There has been much speculation respecting the longevity of the antediluvians. Out of nine men whose ages are recorded, one reached to nearly a thousand (969) years; and with the anomalous exception of Noah's father, who was cut off prematurely at the age of 777, the lowest of the nine reached 895 years. The average of life, reckoned upon the whole nine, is 912 years. It was God's purpose to make of one blood all the nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth—that the tie of brotherhood might the more intimately subsist among them by their derivation from the same ancestors; but that the peopling of the world might not be retarded by this limitation, he gives an immense duration to the lives of the primeval generations, whereby the population of the earth goes on as rapidly as if he had in the first place given existence to twelve or fifteen pairs of human beings. *Kit.*

We may content ourselves with the general principle announced by Delitzsch, that "the duration of antediluvian life depended on circumstances and conditions of the earth which our present knowledge cannot reach." Not to suggest that "climate, weather, and other natural conditions may have been quite different" and that "life was much more simple and uniform," we may emphasize the statement that "the after-effects of the condition of man in paradise (destined for immortality) would not be immediately exhausted." S. C. B.——The longevity of antediluvian life enabled men to acquire inconceivable dexterity in many of the mechanical arts. How great must have been the tact and proficiency resulting from the continued practice of centuries! The prospect of

such longevity would encourage men to lay out comprehensive plans, and to enter on vast undertakings with the expectation of completing them, and of enjoying the fruits. Added to which, that in proportion as this longevity was physiologically dependent on superior climatic influences, it would be also conducive to bodily and mental exertion. J. H.

We can clearly see that such long continuance of life was absolutely necessary, if the earth was to be rapidly peopled, knowledge to advance, and, above all, the worship of God and faith in that promise about a Deliverer which He had revealed, to be continued. As it was, each generation could hand down to remote posterity what it had learned during the centuries of its continuance. Thus Adam was alive to tell the story of Paradise and the fall, and to repeat the word of promise which he had heard from the very mouth of the Lord, when Lamech was born; and though none of the earlier "fathers" could have lived to see the commencement of building the ark, yet Lamech died only five years before "the flood," and his father Methuselah—the longest-lived man—in the very year of the deluge. On the other hand, it was possible to pervert this long duration of life to equally evil purposes. The rare occurrence, during so many centuries, of death with its terrors would tend still more to blunt the conscience; the long association of evil men would foster the progress of corruption and evil; and the apparently indefinite delay of either judgment or deliverance would strengthen the bold unbelief of scoffers. A. E.——Instead of tending to the good of the species, the great length of life seems generally to have been perverted to evil. The substance of Enoch's prophecy, recorded in the Epistle of Jude (ver. 14, 15), shows how much the men of those days lived in forgetfulness of the judgment to come. W. G. B.——In the primitive world, the Cainites devoted themselves almost exclusively to the advancement of a material civilization; and the degeneracy to which it led was the first of a series of lessons which Providence has ever since been giving to man on the utter inefficiency of mere knowledge, power, and æsthetic progress, to save him from ruin; or rather, on the certainty of their conducting him to it, apart from the supreme influence of religion. The Sethites maintained, for a time, a high religious standing; but, descending from their holy elevation, their morality vanished with their religion, and they sank through the successive stages of a refined but death-struck civilization. J. H.

**5. Adam lived 930 years.** By making Adam the depositary of the first communication from heaven, and prolonging his life to nearly a thousand years, the Almighty may be regarded as making the wisest and most gracious arrangement for the welfare of his fallen posterity. For in each and all of the myriads to which they had multiplied, Adam would only behold the multiplications of himself, and would therefore be supposed to feel a father's yearning solicitude for their recovery to God. And even as late as "in the days of Noe," the comparative recency of the fall and its immediate results, by rendering these results so much the more impressive and personally interesting; the small amount and the simplicity of the revelation which had then been made, by rendering it so much the easier to be remembered and imparted; the universal prevalence of the same language, by rendering it so much the easier to diffuse that knowledge universally; and the continued longevity of man, by enabling one party to speak with the authority and tenderness of a parent, disposing the other to listen with the docility and faith of children, and giving to each a family interest in the religious welfare of all—afforded facilities for diffusing the knowledge of God, which strikingly evinced his readiness to save. J. H.

Adam was witness to the beginnings of that universal corruption which at last brought on the deluge; and when he beheld himself the source of these growing evils, he could not fail, with every succeeding year of his life, to entertain deeper and more appalling views of the enormity of his transgression and the justice of his sentence. This would naturally tend in his case, as in every other, to heighten his estimate at once of the goodness and the severity of God, and endear to him that promise which was the hope of a lost world. *Bush.*

**5. He died.** Although this first thread of life was spun through centuries, it cannot last forever. Although divine long-suffering had delayed the execution of the sentence, no word of it had been retracted. "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." The tree of life no longer blossoms here below for the transgressor, who has plucked the fruit of sin. God be thanked that we know Him, the second Adam, who out of death, brought by the first into the world, has taken the sharpest sting. *Van O.*——Death must have originally come to man almost with the startling effect of an appalling revelation. The death of Abel would not, perhaps, on account of its violence, weigh much with the early generations of men as an

illustration of the original sentence against sin. But when the first natural death occurred—and, still more, when at length, after the event had been suspended century after century—when he had seen his descendants in the ninth generation—when he had reached his nine hundred and thirtieth year—the report went forth of Adam "he is dead ; the father of the race has expired," what a deep shadow, as from the throne of justice brought near, must have fallen on the face of nature ! And as, age after age, it had to be recorded of each individual of all these generations, "and he died," what an affecting proof was furnished of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," what a demonstration of the fidelity of God to His word, and of the amplitude of *His* schemes who could defer its fulfilment either for a day or for a thousand years ; and with what strained gaze, we may suppose, would the survivors labor to pierce the darkness which hung over the grave. J. H.

**3-31. Lived and died.** Through the births and deaths of this old Antediluvian Patriarchy there is a moral lesson impressive and sad, giving to these dry numbers a sublime moral dignity. It is not obtrusive ; it is not forced upon the notice ; to the dull reader these details and repetitions may seem barren, but to the man whose spirit is awake, it is the solemn record of execution on the great judgment pronounced in a previous chapter ; it is the commencement of that long death which our humanity has been dying ever since. It is the first great obituary, recorded, not on blank, intervening leaves, but in the beginning of "the volume of the book." It is the title-page to that *true* history of the world, written on the tombs, and preserved where all else perishes, even in the dust of the earth. T. L.

There is something very impressive in this antediluvian record of deaths ; the long periods of life only make it all the more so. It tells forcibly of there being no escape from this law. The cadence of "and he died" recurs with the effect of a tolling bell upon the imagination ; and the length of interval between them adds to the solemnity of the lesson so given forth. The great practical truths of religion are not educed by an ingenious process of inference, but lie before us on the surface of the Bible—on the surface of observation. The thing wanted is that we should consider them ; and this unvarying register of a mortality which no strength of endurance in the vital principle could exempt from, should speak powerfully home to the fears and the urgent interests of the men who now live in this era of puny and ephemeral generations. T. C.

It is reported of one, that, hearing the 5th of Genesis read, so *long lived*, and yet the burden still, *they died*, he took so deep the thought of death and eternity, that it changed his whole frame, and set him from a voluptuous to a most strict and pious course of life. How small a word will do much, when God sets it into the heart ! But sure this one thing would make the soul more calm and sober in the pursuit of present things, if their term were truly computed and considered. How soon shall youth, and health, and carnal delights, be at a end ! How soon shall all the great projects of the highest wits and spirits be laid in the dust ! But to a soul acquainted with God, and in affection removed hence already, no thought so sweet as this ; it helps much to carry it cheerfully through wrestlings and difficulties, through better and worse ; they see land near, and shall quickly be at home ; that is the way. *The end of all things is at hand :* An end of a few poor delights and the many vexations of this wretched life ; an end of temptations and sins, the worst of all evils ; yea, an end of the imperfect fashion of our best things here, an end of prayer itself, to which succeeds that new song of endless praises. *Leighton.*——*The dead*—we speak of them as those who are not. But in this sense there are no dead in the universe ; of the mighty catalogue written in heaven's book of men who have been, not one has passed into nothingness ; of every human being. it is true, that when he began to be, he began to be immortal ; he may have changed his place and his mode of existence, his dust may have returned to the earth as it was ; but yet he lives as truly as he ever did, and will continue to live through ceaseless ages ; and what is true of all before us is and will be true of each one of ourselves. There is a "life to come," and in a very short time we shall be mingling in its scenes with those who have preceded us. E. M.

**24. Enoch walked with God.** We are reminded of the saying, that these primeval genealogies are "monuments alike of the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of his promise, and of the faith and patience of the fathers." Every generation lived its appointed time ; they transmitted the promise to their sons ; and then, having finished their course, they all "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." That is absolutely all we know

of the majority of them. But the emphatic and seemingly needless repetition in each case of the words, "And he died," with which every genealogy closes, tells us that "death reigned from Adam unto Moses," with all the lessons which it conveyed of its origin in sin, and of its conquest by the second Adam. Only one exception occurs to this general rule—in the case of Enoch; when, instead of the brief notice how many years he "lived" after the birth of his son, we read that "he walked with God after he begat Methusaleh three hundred years;" and instead of the simple closing statement that "he died," we are not only a *second* time told that "Enoch walked with God," but also that "he was not; for God took him." Thus both his life and his translation are connected with his "walk with God." A. E.

Enoch and Noah, as they alone of the antediluvians were endowed with the spirit of prophecy, so they alone also are said to have "walked with God,"—an expression never used of any who lived in later times, and denoting the nearest and most confidential intercourse, as if they had all but regained the old paradisiacal freedom of communion with Heaven. And as the divine seal upon this higher elevation of the life of God in their souls, they were both honored with singular tokens of distinction—the one having been taken, without tasting of death, to still nearer fellowship with God, to abide in His immediate presence, while the other became under God the saviour and father of a new world. The contemporaries of Enoch had within their reach the means of knowing that in consideration of his eminent piety he was taken direct to a higher sphere, without undergoing the common lot of mortality. That there should have been but one such case during the whole antediluvian period, could not but be regarded as indicating its exceptional character, and stamping it emphatically as a revelation from Heaven. P. F.

Enoch is the type of those who take the spiritual as distinguished from the sensuous view of human life; who, while they bear their part in all the labors that are done under the sun, seek in everything they do to do it as to God; and while they frankly accept all the recreative and refining ministries devised by the art or wit of man, accept them as the gifts of God, and so find an added sweetness in them. Like Enoch, they walk with God through all the difficult and tangled paths of life, are sustained by Him in the hours of their weakness, guarded by Him in their times of peril, and find their fellowship with Him grow more intimate, more ennobling, more consolatory, year by year. *The end* of these respective lines of action is set forth in the several fates of Lamech and Enoch. In Enoch we see the spiritual man rising into the heaven which his life has prepared him to inherit and enjoy: while in Lamech and his children we see the servants of sense sink into the doom for which their course and habits of life had fitted them,—their thoughts growing more evil, their deeds more corrupt, until the flood arose and swept them away. Each goes to *his own* place. *Cox.*

In proportion as any one draws near to God, and thinks of Him, and prays to Him constantly and earnestly, so does he become familiar with the life beyond the grave, and find it possible and natural to fix his faith there. For with God continually in our thoughts,—God in Christ I mean, for a Christian knows God no otherwise than as approached through His Son,—with God constantly thought of, prayed to, praised, thanked, and served, it is impossible that death should any longer be so great a barrier, or the state beyond it so dark and cheerless. For to God there is no difference of time or state; he is after our death as before it, before it as after it, in all respects the same. And death, which to Him is absolutely nothing, becomes to us also less and less in proportion as we are more entirely His. So it is said that Enoch walked with God, and then it is added, "and he was not, for God took him." He walked with God on earth, and he walked with God in heaven, and the two became blended into one, and the barrier between them melted away into nothing. This is a true type, showing that the sense of death is destroyed by our consciousness of God. He who walks with God faithfully here, all that is said of him will be, "he was not, for God took him;" he will be missed here by us, but to himself it is in a manner all but one life, the latter part the more perfect and the happier, yet both were passed with God. *T. Arnold.*

Very delightful it is to discover in the description of Enoch's character the fact that in its main features the experience of the truly religious soul has been the same in all the ages of human history. The altar may vary, the ritual may change, the priesthood may pass from Melchizedek to Aaron, and from Aaron to Christ; the tabernacle may take the place of the patriarchal tent, and the Temple may supersede the tabernacle, only in its turn to be superseded by the spiritual system of the Gospel; yet, amid all these mutations, those deep experiences of men's souls which constitute the

true springs of their religious life have been the same, and to-day no more appropriate description of a good and saintly man could be given than this, "He walked with God." W. M. T. ——To walk with God, is to set God always before us, and to act as those that are always under his eye. It is to live a life of communion with God, both in ordinances and providences ; it is to make God's word our rule, and his glory our end, in all our actions ; it is to make it our constant care and endeavor in everything to please God, and in nothing to offend him ; it is to comply with his will, to concur with his designs, and to be workers together with him ; it is to be *followers of him as dear children.* H.

Adam died only fifty-seven years before Enoch's translation, and Enoch probably enjoyed the society of that remarkable man for more than three centuries. From Adam's own lips he could learn the story of the creation, he could become acquainted with the primeval bliss of Eden, he could ascertain that law of paradise under which our first parents sinned and fell, he could look with familiar gaze into the dark problem of the origin of evil. By a more minute acquaintance with the events of that mysterious period, he could attain a clearer insight than we into the operations of Providence, and the wisdom of those counsels which were developed in the ruin of the human race. He had moreover the book of nature ever open to him, and those works through which he communed with their divine author were peculiarly rich in illustration of the divine character. In his own sanctified and inspired consciousness he had another and better source of sacred knowledge, and favored as he was by the teachings of that Great Spirit whose society he cultivated, he was no doubt as highly venerated for the extent of his attainments as for the depth of his devotion. Whatever may be thought of the oriental traditions, which ascribe to him the invention of letters and learning, the literal import of his name implies that he was *initiated* into rare mysteries, and one of his predictions as it is preserved to us by an inspired apostle, discloses a reach of vision which from that remote period, the very beginning of the world's history, could look down through all the lapse of ages to the very last event which is the subject of prophecy, the final judgment of the ungodly. *Homer.*

Of Enoch we know that he not only walked with God as a friend with his friend, but as a *prophet* he stood forth boldly against the transgression of his age. *Van O.*——At the time appointed by the Father for the accomplishment of Enoch's prophecy, when the Lord shall come to judgment with ten thousand of his saints (Jude 14), that which was foreshown by the translation of Enoch, and fulfilled in the ascension of the natural body of Christ, shall be brought to pass likewise in His mystical body, the Church, and the members thereof. They shall "not be found" in the ruins of a burning world, because God shall have "translated" them to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. This is but the completion of that great work begun in them by the Spirit of God in this life. Blessed and holy is he, who hath part in this first "translation" from sin to righteousness, the sure pledge and earnest of the second from dust to glory. *Bp. Horne.*

The miracle of Enoch's *translation* was another Divine intimation, pointing to *the existence of an invisible world.* "He was not, for God took him." "He was translated *that he should not see death.*" J. H.——In the case of Enoch alone, we read, not that "he died," but that "he *was* not, for God took him." This implies two things: that he was exempted from natural death, and that he entered upon a higher and better existence as the consequence of having walked, not with the world, but with God. C. G. B.——Is it even supposable that Moses thought this was annihilation—taking a godly man out of existence? Extinguishing his being because he walked with God! If the Lord had made this problem a special study—how best to teach and impress the doctrine of a future blessed life for the righteous who walk with God on earth, we cannot see how he could have improved upon the method he actually adopted, viz. to take the godly Enoch from earth to heaven without dying. H. C.——If there is no future life, in which virtue receives its appropriate reward, what a reflection is here upon the God of the Hebrews! A man, illustrious beyond all his contemporaries for piety, is cut off in the midst of his days and rewarded with annihilation! The record conveys almost as plain a revelation of a future life as the declaration of the Lord of life himself, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth." E. C. W.

The "taking away" of Enoch is one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state, prevailing among the Hebrews ; without this belief the history of Enoch is a perfect mystery, a hieroglyph without a clew, a commencement without an end. *Kalisch.*——Enoch does not die, but lives, and not only lives, but is advanced to a new stage of life, in which all the

power and pain of sin are at an end forever. This crowns and signalizes the power of grace, and represents in brief the grand finale of a life of faith. This renewed man is received up into glory without going through the intermediate steps of death and resurrection. This translation took place in the presence of a sufficient number of witnesses, and furnished a manifest proof of the presence and reality of the invisible powers. Thus were life and immortality as fully brought to light as was necessary or possible at that early stage of the world's history. Thus was it demonstrated that the grace of God was triumphant in accomplishing the final and full salvation of all who returned to God. M.

God "translated him" either in soul or body, or both, to a place and state of happiness:—A most convincing argument and proof of a life after this; and sufficient, one would have thought, to have silenced the Sadducees, who received this book. God gave the world this instance, perhaps to convince them, how he would have dealt with Adam, and all his posterity, had they continued in obedience to his command. *Bp. Wilson.*——The occurrence was an impressive revelation of the existence, the omniscience, and the holiness of God, which were constantly becoming more and more forgotten; of the eternal separation between those who serve God and those who serve Him not; of the life and immortality especially to be expected after departure from this world. *Van O.*

**29.** These words bear testimony to an ardent heart longing for the better inheritance, which even to Lamech appeared to be substantially involved in the promise of the Seed of the woman. This longing was called forth by the curse which burdened the ground, and which, amidst his bitter toils and troubles, seemed to him all the heavier and greater as his experience of the ravages of sin increased. His only comfort under the hardships he endured was to look to the bruiser of the serpent. For this reason he gave to his son the name of Noah—that is, *rest*,—a name which in sound resembles the Hebrew verb *to comfort*. From this son he expected consolation and rest. Lamech died five years prior to the deluge, and was the first of the patriarchs who, by a *natural* death, departed this life before his father. His father Methuselah died just before the flood. The righteous perish, and merciful men are taken away from the evil to come, and enter into peace (Isa. 57 : 1). C. G. B.

All the patriarchs here, except Noah, were born before Adam died; so that from him they might receive a full and satisfactory account of the creation, paradise, the fall, the promise, and those divine precepts which concerned religious worship and a religious life. So great was the care of Almighty God to preserve in his church the knowledge of his will, and the purity of his worship. H.

## Section 30.

### FLOOD ANNOUNCED. PERIOD OF GOD'S PATIENCE. BY DIRECTION, NOAH PREPARES AN ARK.

GENESIS 6 : 1–22.

1 AND it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters
2 were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and
3 they took them wives of all that they chose. And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years.
4 The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men
5 which were of old, the men of renown. And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil con-
6 tinually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him
7 at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air; for it repenteth
8 me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.
9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, *and* perfect in his genera-

10 tions : Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And
11 the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the
12 earth, and, behold, it was corrupt ; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.
13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me ; for the earth is filled
14 with violence through them ; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an
ark of gopher wood ; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without
15 with pitch. And this is how thou shalt make it : the length of the ark three hundred cubits,
16 the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A light shalt thou make to
the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward ; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in
17 the side thereof ; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And I, behold, I
do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life,
18 from under heaven ; every thing that is in the earth shall die. But I will establish my cove-
nant with thee ; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy
19 sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou
20 bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee ; they shall be male and female. Of the fowl
after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after
21 its kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. And take thou unto
thee of all food that is eaten, and gather it to thee ; and it shall be for food for thee, and for
22 them. Thus did Noah ; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Having traced the line of descent from Adam through Seth, the seed of God, to Noah, the author proceeds to describe the general spread and growth of moral evil in the race of man, and the determination of the Lord to wipe it away from the face of the earth. M.

Constantly, as the well-spring of life flowed on, the stream of human depravity swelled into a deeper and broader flood. There were things in God's earlier procedure that were naturally fitted to check its working, and repress its growth—especially the forbearance and kindness with which He treated the first race of transgressors—the wonderful longevity granted to them—the space left for repentance even to the greatest sinners, while still sufficient means were employed to convince them of their guilt and danger.—all seeming to betoken the solicitude of a father yearning over his offspring, and restraining for a season the curse that now rested on their condition, if so be they might be won to His love and service. But it was the evil, not the good, in man's nature, which took advantage of this treatment of God, to ripen into strength and fruitfulness. And, erelong, the very goodness of God found it needful to interpose, and relieve the earth of the violence and corruption which had come to usurp possession of the world. So that, looking simply to the broad facts of history, the doctrine of human guilt and depravity stands forth with a promi nence and intensity which could leave no doubt concerning it upon thoughtful minds. P. F.

Sixteen centuries—almost as long as from the advent of Christ to this present time—are despatched, in sacred history, in the briefest possible mention. What was the meaning of that immense chasm and void in the life of our race? The world was full of people ; but it was full of sin. May not this be the import of that historic lesson—to furnish, for all time, one undeniable proof that, left to himself, apostate man had no power or prospect of recovery? Knowledge of promised relief was limited : all which existed was in the form of tradition, and this growing fainter and fainter, like a dying echo ; providential restraints were few ; so to speak, God seems to have withdrawn himself from the race that sought to be independent of him, that the world might know, for all time, that ruined mind never restores itself ; that the planet which breaks away from the attraction of the sun finds no power within itself by which it is brought back, but its centrifrugal force is multiplied with terrific speed, driving it further and further, faster and faster, into the blackness of darkness. Left to itself, the race of man increased in wickedness with such gigantic strides, that the earth and the skies sickened at the spectacle, and the waters of the great deep swept them away. The termination of that first long stage of human history was the *Deluge*. *W. Adams.*

**2. Sons of God.** In the view of some Fathers of the Church, the Reformers, and in more modern times Dettinger, Hengstenberg, Keil, and others, the expression "sons of God" refers *to men*, to *the pious race descended from Seth*, as the name "sons of God" is used in Deut. 14 : 1 ; 32 : 5 ; Hos. 2 : 1 ; Ps. 73 : 15. On this view, the passage refers to the marriage of Seth's descendants with Cainitic women, by which means the corruption of Cain's race spread among the Sethites. Not only is the

connection in which the whole story stands to what precedes, but also ver. 3, in which an erring of man, not of the higher spirits, is spoken of, in favor of the latter view ; but so also is the expression "they took wives," which is confessedly used in the Old Testament only in speaking of formal marriage. O.——The family of Seth, on account of its adherence to the true religion, were styled "the sons of God ;" the descendants of Cain and the other branches of the family who united with him in his impiety, "the sons of men," denoting that they were a carnal, irreligious race. *R. Hall.*

We are not probably justified in saying that there were but two races descended from Adam, the race of Cain and the race of Seth. Adam may have had many sons ; but the history of the Cainites is preserved because both of their impiety and of their ingenuity ; that of the Sethites, because at least in one line of that race piety and true religion flourished, and of them came the family of Noah which was preserved in the ark. There appears to have been a growing corruption of mankind, more rapid, no doubt, in the family of Cain than in any other race, but still spreading far and wide. The line of the Sethites, traced in ch. 5, alone appears to have kept itself pure, the little Church of God, in the midst of gathering darkness of the world around. This little Church may well have been called "the children of God," a term by no means limited in Scripture to the holy angels. They alone were the salt of the earth ; and if that salt should lose its savor, all would become worthless and vile. When therefore some of these "sons of God" went out from their own little home circle, to make mixed marriages with the general heathenized races round them, the elements of corruption were brought from the world into the Church. E. H. B.

**1, 2.** When man began to multiply, the separate families of Cain and Seth would come into contact. The daughters of the stirring Cainites, distinguished by the graces of nature, the embellishments of art, and the charms of music and song, even though destitute of the loftier qualities of likemindedness with God, would attract attention and prompt to unholy alliances. The godly took them wives of the ungodly as well as the godly families, without any discrimination. "Whom they chose," not for the godliness of their lives, but for the goodliness of their looks. M.

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair ;" just as Eve saw the tree that it was pleasant to the eye. Here was the last turning-point of importance of the *family* probation Social man was about to repeat the act of individual man, and to take the forbidden fruit. "And they took them wives of all which they chose." The sensual triumphed over the rational and the moral. The sons of God, in their social capacity, apostatized from God. Their self-will came into direct collision with his authority. The family had fallen from its high object of constituting the Church of God. If the time should come when the relations of family to family, and of one community of families to another, shall be employed only to answer sensual, unjust, and impious purposes, every principle of moral government will warrant and call for Divine interference. From the moment when "the sons of God took them wives of all which they chose," the higher design of the conjugal s ate was defeated ; it was prostituted to sensual purposes ; and the doom of the family constitution itself, as a distinct economy, was sealed. Hence, the reason assigned by God for terminating the probationary contest with man is (v. 3), "for that he also is flesh." In other words, his own professed worshippers, by joining the sensual for sensual ends had merged the last hope of recovery in profligacy. And being thus perverted into an evil to the individual, the family became also an organization of social oppression and wrong. Brute force bore down law and right. Families banded together for the perpetration of more extensive wrong. Men became renowned in proportion to their deeds of rapine and bloodshed. And "the earth was filled with violence through them" (v. 11). J. H.——If there had not been so deep a deluge of sin there had been none of the waters. From whence then was this superfluity of iniquity? Whence, but from the unequal yoke with infidels. These marriages did not beget men so much as wickedness ; from hence religious husbands both lost their piety and gained a rebellious and godless generation. *Bp. H.*

**3.** "Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man (the *Adam*) ; for that they are but flesh, and their days shall be an hundred and twenty years." In the somewhat obscure brevity of this speech, it is difficult to determine the force of each word ; but the general sense seems to be : "I will take away from man the life I at first gave him, since he has corrupted himself to mere flesh, and I will limit his time on earth to one hundred and twenty years." That the period thus defined was a space for repentance, seems clear from the context. P. S.

The verb (translated "strive") is currently

used of judicial transactions—searching out, convincing, convicting; and seems to have a striking analogy in that leading word given us by Christ; "When he is come, he shall *reprove* the world"—enforce conviction upon the world—as to sin and righteousness. God may righteously say—nay must in honor to himself say—My Spirit shall not plead my cause in man forever. He is utterly gone over to the flesh, and nothing remains but that he must perish. One hundred and twenty years of merciful respite for patient warning and exhaustive trial must suffice:—then, if no penitence appear, judgment must fall, and that without remedy! Thus God places on record the moral causes and antecedents of this fearful visitation, that its moral lessons may go down to distant ages for their admonition to the end of time. H. C.

——From this passage we learn that the Lord by his Spirit strives with man up to a certain point. In this little negative sentence streams out the bright light of God's free and tender mercy to the apostate race of man. He sends his Spirit to irradiate the darkened mind, to expostulate with the conscience, to prompt and strengthen holy resolve, and to bring back the heart, the confidence, the affection to God. But it is a solemn thought that there is a certain point beyond which he will not go, for sufficient reasons known fully to himself, partly to us. *First*, he will not touch the free agency of his rational creatures. He can put no *force* on the volitions of men. An involuntary or compulsory faith, hope, love, obedience, is a contradiction in terms; and anything that could bear the name can have no moral validity whatsoever. *Secondly*, after giving ample warning, instruction, and invitation, he will, as a just judgment on the unbelieving and the impenitent, withdraw his Spirit and let them alone. M

From the method God took in this judgment, first withdrawing his Spirit and then introducing the flood, it appears that God's taking away his Spirit from any soul is the certain forerunner of the ruin and destruction of that soul. From the expression, "the Spirit's striving with man," which always implies resistance from the party striven with, it appears that there is in man's heart a natural enmity and opposition to the motions of God's holy Spirit. And from the definitive sentence that God here passes, that *his Spirit should not always strive with man*, it appears that there is a set and punctual time, after which the convincing operations of God's Spirit upon the heart of man in order to his conversion will cease and forever leave him. *South.*

Awhile he will strive, he will awaken, he will convince, he will call to remembrance former sins, former judgments, the breach of former vows and promises, the misspending of former days. He will also present persuasive arguments, encouraging promises, dreadful judgments, the shortness of time to repent in; and that there is hope if he come. He will show him the certainty of death and of the judgment to come, yea, thus he will strive with the sinner. But, behold, here is laboring and striving on *both sides*. The Spirit convinces, the man turns a deaf ear to God; the Spirit saith, Receive my instruction and live, but the man pulls away his shoulder; the Spirit shows him whither he is going, but the man closeth his eyes against it; the Spirit offers violence, the man strives and resists: he "does despite unto the Spirit of grace." The Spirit parleyeth a second time and urgeth reasons of a new nature, but the sinner answereth, No; I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. At this, God comes out of his holy place, and is terrible; now he sweareth in his wrath they shall never enter into his rest (Ezek. 34 : 13). I exercised toward you my patience, yet you have not turned unto me, saith the Lord. I smote you in your person, in your relations, in your estate, yet you have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" *Bunyan.*

Such a dispensation upon the part of God, as the withdrawal from a man of his Holy Spirit, is never the result of a dark and mysterious sovereignty. Sovereignty is an attribute of grace. The salvation of every sinner is an act of sovereignty; but the infliction of evil falls within the province of justice, and its reasons are always taken from the character and doings of its subject. Hence, when you read in the Bible of the suspension or withdrawal of divine influences from a man, you always find it represented in connection with some previous wrong conduct on his part, and as a punishment of that conduct. Spiritual abandonment is the judicial result of spiritual resistance. The Spirit of God ceases to strive because he is driven from the human bosom. E. M.

There is no more wondrous subject than the patience of God! Think of the lapse of ages, during which that patience has lasted! Think of the multitudes who have been the subjects of it! Think of the sins which have all that time been trying and wearying that patience—their number—their heinousness—their aggravation! The world's history is a consecutive history of iniquity, a lengthened provocation

of the Almighty's forbearance. The Church, like a feeble ark, tossed on a mighty ocean of unbelief; and yet the world, with its cumberers, *still spared!* The cry of its sinful millions at this moment entering 'the ears of the God of Sabaoth," and yet, for all this, his hand of mercy is stretched out still! *An.*

There is no more affecting view of our human life than that which presents it to us as a scene of the perpetual working of Divine compassion, seeking by every possible agency and avenue to enter in and rouse us from apathy, to break the sinful sleep, to open our eyes on the beauty of holiness in the face of Christ, to unseal our ears that they may hear the voices of a higher world than this, and to draw us into the blessedness of reconciliation and communion with our Lord. The air we breathe is all quick with these gracious ministries. Till we find it out we discern only the surface, we comprehend nothing of the glory, of the common life we are living It is but a tread-mill march, or a mere scramble of appetites, or a whirl of vulgar intoxications, or a mocking dance of illusions. Strong words are used by Holy Scripture to declare the earnest reality of this Divine solicitation, so much more merciful to us than we are to ourselves. The Spirit *strives* with man. He pleads, He presses, He teaches, He watches, He pursues, He cries, He wrestles, He agonizes, He maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered. What kind of a nature must it be that can stay indifferent to a Love like that? F. D. H.

What mean those oft-formed resolutions to which kindled fears give birth, and what those oft-repeated vows originating in intelligent conviction, if they are not the evidence of some mighty though mysterious agency at work upon the mind? Lo! we carry within us the proofs that the Spirit of God strives with man. Truth, a thousand times heard before without awakening emotion, now rousing us to thought; claims, a thousand times before presented and at best but listlessly received, now securing a prompt and intelligent response from conscience; feeling, quick, deep, permanent, perhaps excited under the demonstrations of the gospel; these as facts defining our own circumstances and testified to by our own consciousness, are the evidences of our subjection to the influences of the Holy Ghost. E. M.

What has God done to induce men to do their duty? He has created men; he preserves them in existence; he inhabits their consciences and all their faculties; he enswathes them with manifestations of his Power and Goodness in the natural world; he instructs them by the course of history, general and personal; he places above them Heaven, beneath them Hell, and before them the Cross. Could God do more to induce man to repent and not overpower his freedom of will? Who can say that God, without overpowering or impairing man's freedom, could do more than he has done to persuade man to do his duty?

The seven knocks from the Divine Hand, on man's door, are Nature, History, Conscience, Heaven, Hell, Christ, the Holy Spirit; and in all God! In the individual life, in national life, in the life of the world as a whole, God knocks for admission to the human heart with these seven blows. With every birthday, with every hour of sickness, with every bereavement, with every illumination of the soul by the solemnity of solitude, by ten thousand voices from Nature and from history, and from the depths of conscience, God expresses his desire to enter the human soul.

The Scriptural teaching as to the knocking of God at man's door shows: 1. That some act of man's free will must go before God's entrance into the soul. Man is to open the door. 2. That man has natural power to do this and a corresponding responsibility. 3. That God's knocking invites, inspires, persuades and enables man to do this act, but that God does not himself force open the door. 4. That God's entrance and man's opening the door are practically simultaneous—the two sides of one indivisible transaction—regeneration and repentance. 5. That God enters and sups with man, and he with God. On condition of the opening of the door, friendship with God follows. 6. That if *any* man will open the door God will enter. 7. That God stands at *all* doors knocking. 8. That if *any* man does not open the door of his soul to God, the fault is that of the man only. 9. That there is a difference between the general and special operations of the Divine Spirit—general while knocking, special after entering. 10. That the duty of immediate opening of the door lies upon all. 11. That every refusal to open adds to man's guilt and peril, and that there must be on the part of the unyielding soul a refusal for every knock, and that the knocking is incessant, and that so the guilt and peril of evil choices mount swiftly to vast magnitudes.

Just so the Scriptural teaching concerning man's knocking at God's door shows: 1. That it is an act of man's free will to knock at God's door. 2. That man's want and power and God's promise inspire the desire on man's part

to knock at God's door. 3. That man's knocking and God's opening are practically simultaneous—two sides of one indivisible transaction—Repentance and Regeneration. 4. That the law of *from less to more* prevails here, so that, after the general influences of the Spirit are rightly obeyed, the special influences follow. 5. That if any man will knock God will open. 6. That God invites all men to knock. 7. That if any man does not knock, it is wholly his own fault. 8. That the duty of immediate knocking lies upon all. 9. That every refusal adds to the soul's guilt and peril. There is distinct Scriptural teaching that a time arrives when the gate of opportunity is shut, and the soul knocks at a closed door. *J Cook.*

**His days shall be an hundred and twenty years.** "In the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark." Judgment was not executed precipitately. One hundred and twenty years intervened between the prediction and its accomplishment. Full scope was thus given for the circulation of the intelligence throughout the then habitable world—full time for the awful tidings to visit every dwelling. E. M. G.——A hundred and twenty years was less than the eighth of the average duration of antediluvian life : and, in respect of warning, was not more to that generation than nine years would be to us. It was, therefore, an interval just long enough for effective warning, without being so long as to allow any man that lived, to deem that he might neglect that warning without danger. Noah himself seems to have been the instrument of making this warning known, and of preaching repentance, since Peter calls him "a preacher of righteousness." But the construction of the ark was in itself a warning the most impressive. It evinced the sincerity of Noah's conviction, that the judgment he declared really impended over mankind ; and as its vast proportions slowly rose, the rumor of this immense and strange undertaking must have spread far and wide, with the report of the reasons which the builder gave for its construction. Thus "the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." *Kit.*

This passage should be viewed in connection with 1 Pet. 3 : 18–20, from which we learn that it was no other than the *Spirit of Christ* that through the instrumentality of the pious patriarch preached to the disobedient spirits of the old world. *Bush.*——The spirits are the souls of those *now* in prison, who once enjoyed a space for repentance on earth. The connection leaves us no room to doubt with respect to those intended by this description. They were the sinners destroyed by the flood. To these, Christ had once preached. *How?* Did he preach to them personally? The immediate antecedent here is the Spirit, meaning either the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, or the divine nature of Christ. "For Christ also hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the *Spirit*, by which," that is, the Spirit, "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." By the Spirit, Christ preached to the inhabitants of the old world. We are accordingly assured, that the Bible is the *word of Christ*, and that the prophets received their messages from his "Spirit that was in them" (Col. 3 : 16 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 11). Noah is called "a preacher of righteousness" in 2 Pet. 2 : 5, and it was the Spirit of Christ which inspired Noah, and spoke, as it were, by the mouth of that holy man. There is plainly allusion here to Gen. 6 : 3, "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man ;" it had striven by the warnings given him ; but these warnings shall cease, "for that he also is flesh ; yet his days," the term of his probation yet remaining, "shall be an hundred and twenty years."

*When* did Christ preach to the antediluvian sinners? *Before the flood.* This is evident, not only from the foregoing, but from the following connection : "Which sometime" (*formerly*) "were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (it is not said waited till after Christ's death, which must have been the case, if Christ after his death went and preached to them), but "in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." All the calls of Noah, every stroke upon the ark, were so many calls of Christ to a rebellious and perishing world (Matt. 10 : 40 ; Luke 10 : 16 ; John 13 : 20). It is the constant representation of the Bible, that the deluge came, *when*, and *not before*, God's *long-suffering* toward that generation had come to a close (Gen. 7 : 1 ; Matt. 24 : 37–39 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 5). "Elsner," as quoted by Macknight, "on this passage, hath produced examples from the Scriptures, and from Demosthenes, to show that the phrase, he *went and preached*, is a pleonasm for he *preached*." Among the examples from Scripture, the clearest and most direct is Eph. 2 : 15–17. "*Having abolished*, etc., he *came and preached peace to you who were*

*afar off, and to them who were nigh.*" For it is certain, that our Lord after his resurrection did not go personally to the Gentiles to preach peace to them. He preached to them by his apostles only. But if Christ is said by Paul to go and do what he did by his apostles, he may with equal propriety be said by Peter to go and do what he did by his prophet Noah.

There is nothing then in the words of Peter to sustain the doctrine of a new probation after death. The persons of whom he spoke were antediluvian sinners, who, at the time he wrote, were spirits in the prison of despair. These had been faithfully warned by the preaching of Noah, before they were carried away by the flood. The argument then from this passage, in favor of a second probation to those who die in ignorance, is wholly out of place ; since the antediluvians were not ignorant, but enjoyed many advantages under the preaching of Noah, whose frequent and solemn warnings they utterly disregarded and despised. Divine patience could bear with them no longer. Their wickedness is declared to have been total, and peculiarly aggravated (Gen. 6 : 5–7). Even if Christ be supposed to have preached to them, after their descent into *hades*, there is not the smallest evidence or intimation, that any of them obeyed his voice during their second term of probation, and were liberated from their prison. If the passage prove anything to the purpose for which it is alleged, it proves more than was intended, namely, that a new probation has been granted to some of the most hardened sinners, and consequently it is possible at least that all mankind will sooner or later attain salvation. The argument is legitimate for Universalists ; but overstrained and self-destructive when applied to the defence of any other creed. *J. Woodbridge.*

**4. Giants in those days.** Almost every record of antiquity hands down the tradition of a family or race of giants. Nor does their existence appear to be any more enigmatical than the amazing strength, magnitude, and duration of many of the structures of the ancients—the pyramids, for example, and the hundred gated Thebes. Geology points us to past worlds of gigantic ferns, tree-grasses, and lofty mosses ; and to reptiles tall and bulky as the elephant, rhinoceros, or hippopotamus. "There were animal-giants in those days ;" and why not human giants in later days? The size of the body oscillates between certain extreme limits. During the early period of man's history, the extreme development of his bulk and strength took place to a much greater extent than at present ; though the instances of gigantic stature which still occur are more frequent than is commonly supposed. It is erroneously inferred by many that these antediluvian giants sprang from the union spoken of in the context between the sons of God and the daughters of men. Whereas the statement seems constructed expressly to guard against such an inference : "In those days were the (well-known) *Nephilim* in the earth. Also *after that* the sons of God," etc. Two periods are spoken of. Giants existed prior to the period of the unions in question, and continued to exist afterward. J. H.

On the whole, it seems that the antediluvian world had reached a desperate pitch of wickedness, the climax of which was attained by the fusion of the two races. The marked features of this wickedness were lust and brutal outrage. P. S.——The flood came, not because the race of Cain were corrupt and wicked, but because the generation of the righteous had fallen into disobedience, lust, and tyranny. When the members of the true Church degenerate, the judgments of God are close at hand. *Luther.*

It is happily clear that God is moved by what we would call moral considerations, and not by arbitrary impulse, in his government of mankind. The man who does an action simply to please himself is said to act arbitrarily ; the action is not founded upon argument or reason, and is therefore arbitrary. **5.** In this case God gives his reasons, and discloses every step in the process of his pathetic and mournful argument. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth." That is the basis of action. God's purpose in creating man had been frustrated ; its frustration involved the ruin of man, as if by a suicidal act. God, therefore, seeing that ruin *must* come, acted judicially, as in the first instance he had acted creatively. J. P. ——"God *saw* the thoughts of men that they were only evil continually." They were not cherishing their foul conceptions, pursuing their mad calculations, unwatched, uncared for. There was an eye looking down into their most inward secrets, penetrating the intents of their hearts. And that was the eye of One who desired to make them right within ; who had determined that His earth should be purged of its corruptions,—should fulfil all the ends of His creation. And why could He not make it fulfil them, by a fiat of His omnipotence? Because He had made man in His own image ; because He had given him a will ; because He could only restore and regenerate him by restoring and regenerating his will. Hence we have to read all the Bible through, of floods, famines,

pestilences, earthquakes, anarchy, tyranny. It is throughout, the history of an actual government, - throughout, the history of an actual education ; a government of voluntary creatures to teach them subjection ;—an education of voluntary creatures to make them free. And He who carries on this government and education, is seen, the more He makes Himself known to us, to be not a hard despot, but a loving Ruler ; with that heart and sympathy in perfection which He requires in His creatures. If this be so, do you wonder that it is said, "*It repented God that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart*"? *Maurice.*

Every man might have exhibited the modified excellence of a Seth, an Enoch, or a Noah. Each patriarchal family might have displayed its own distinctive phase of excellence ; while it yet stood in harmonious relation with the great whole. Every succeeding year, from the first man to the flood, might have added a new page to the volume of Divine manifestation transcribed from the character of man. There was no necessitating reason why the day that poured down the deluge on a world already drenched with evil, did not see it flooded with heavenly light in approbation of its spiritual proficiency. But by what long travail in sin had man reached his fearful climax ! Every sinful man that had lived had tried the patience of God "in his own way," in a manner different from all the rest. Every godless family had varied the great experiment on his long-suffering. What lessons, warnings, and significant intimations each man of many centuries had unconsciously sown broadcast as he walked through life ; and what vital seeds, numerous as the spores shed in autumn, had others unconsciously scattered in his path - to be all trodden into the general mire ! What myriads of children had come age after age, bringing with them traces of their Divine origin and mission—to be all wrought up into the great organization of evil ! What an amount of resistance man must have offered to Divine remonstrances and restraints, in order to break through them all ! What miseries he had been content to endure in his prolonged hostility against God ! J. H.

**6. It repented the Lord.** All the language of this portion of Scripture is suited to the infant condition of the world. Hence human sentiments are even more than in the later books of Scripture attributed to the Almighty. No sound criticism would see any appearance of myth in this E. H. B.——When the holy Scriptures speak of God, they ascribe *hands*, and *eyes*, and *feet*, to Him · not that He has any of these members, according to the literal signification ; but the meaning is, that He has a power to execute all those acts, to the effecting of which these parts in us are instrumental : that is, He can converse with men, as well as if He had a tongue or mouth ; can discern all that we do or say, as perfectly as if He had eyes and ears ; and can reach us as well as if He had hands or feet. In like manner, the Scripture frequently represents Him as affected with such passions as we perceive in ourselves ; namely, as angry and pleased, loving and hating, repenting and grieving ; and yet upon reflection we cannot suppose that any of these passions can *literally* affect the Divine nature : therefore the meaning is that He will as certainly punish the wicked as if He were inflamed with the passion of anger against them ; as infallibly reward the good, as we will those for whom we have a particular affection : and that, when He finds any alteration in His creatures, either for the better or the worse, He will as surely change His dispensations toward them as if He really repented or changed His mind. It is by way of *analogy* and *comparison*, therefore, that the nature and passions of men are ascribed to God : so that when He is said to *repent* or *grieve*, the meaning must be, not that He perceived anything that He was ignorant of before to give Him any uneasiness (for "known unto God are all His works from the beginning") ; but only that He altered His conduct with regard to men as they varied in their behavior toward Him, just as we are wont to do when we are moved by any of these passions and changes of affection. *Stackhouse.*——A truly comprehensive study of God, and of the real conditions under which he must be revealed, makes it more than doubtful whether we have gained a more accurate, or even a more spiritual conception of God, by discarding what is called the anthropopathic imagery of the Old Testament,—representing God as feeling emotions, joy, grief, pity, like ourselves. The straining after literal accuracy dilutes the vigorous conception. Our God sometimes seems further off than the Jewish Jehovah was, and what we gain to exactness, in our attempts to eliminate these material configurations of Deity, is worse than lost to trust, in the dissipating of the personality. F. D. H.

"Repentance with man," says an old divine, "is *the changing of the will ;* repentance with God *the willing of a change.*" In this case *the very same principles* which would lead him to reward and bless the obedient, would lead him also to punish the perverse and rebellious. The words before us express, with an energy and im-

pressiveness which probably nothing purely literal could have conveyed, the exceeding sinfulness and provoking nature of sin. *Bush.*——It does not bespeak any change in God's *mind;* for he is in one mind, and who can turn him? But it bespeaks a change of his *way;* when God had made man upright, *he rested and was refreshed* (Ex. 31 : 17), and his way toward him was such as showed he was pleased with the work of his own hands; but now that man was apostatized, he could not do otherwise than show himself displeased: so that the change was in man, not in God. God repented that he had *made* man; but we never find him repenting that he *redeemed* man, though that was a work of much greater expense. H.——As a man, when he repents, changes his course of procedure, so God, when he changes his procedure, is said to repent, seeing that such change would be in man the result of repentance. Yet there is here a change, not as in man, of the will or purpose – but of the work of procedure only. Repentance in man is the changing of his will as well as of his work; repentance in God is the change of the work only, and not of the will, which in Him is incapable of change. Seeing that there is no mistake in his councils, no disappointment of his purposes, no frustration of his expectations – God can never change his will, though he may will to change his work. The cause is, in all these cases, put, by metonomy, for the effect. It would seem that all these expressions, whereby God is presented to the mind as invested with human parts and passions, involve a sort of looking forward to that period in which they would all become proper and appropriate, by our being permitted to view God in Christ, who has carried the real experiences of our nature into the very heavens, where he sits, not as one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but as one who has been tempted like as we are, yet remained without sin. Had God been, in the Old Testament, set before our mind wholly in the abstract qualities of his being—there would have been a lack of unity in the mode in which he is presented to the apprehension of the heart (we say not of the *mind*) under the two dispensations. But the Lord, knowing from the beginning the aspect in which he would be eventually presented to the church in Christ, permitted beforehand these humanized indications of himself, that there might be under both dispensations an entire oneness of feeling in regard to him. *Kit.*

**7.** The alternation of epochs of tolerance and destruction is in accordance with the workings of God's providence here and now. For though the characteristic of that providence as we see it is merciful forbearance, yet we are not left without many a premonition of the mighty final "day of the Lord." For long years or centuries a nation or an institution goes on slowly departing from truth, forgetting the principles on which it rests, or the purposes for which it exists. Patiently God pleads with the evil-doers, lavishes gifts and warnings upon them. He holds back the inevitable avenging as long as restoration is yet possible—and *His* eye and heart see it to be possible long after men conclude that the corruption is hopeless. But at last comes a period when He says, "I have long still holden my peace, and refrained Myself; now will I destroy." *A. Maclaren.*

**8. Noah found grace.** Now for the first time *grace* itself finds a tongue to express its name. Grace has its fountain in the divine breast. The stream has been flowing forth to Adam, Eve, Abel, Enoch, and others unknown to fame. By the time it reaches Noah it has found a name, by which it is recognized among men to this day. This completes the circle of saving doctrine in regard to God that comes down from the antediluvian times He intimates that the seed of the woman, an individual pre-eminently so called, will bruise the serpent's head. He clothes our first parents with coats of skin—an earnest and an emblem of the better, the moral clothing of the soul. He regards Abel and his offering. He *accepts* him that in faith does well. He translates Enoch, who walked with him. His Spirit has been striving with antediluvian man. Here are the Spirit of God and the seed of the woman. Here are clothing, regarding, accepting, translating. Here, then, is salvation provided and applied, begun, continued, and completed. And last, though not least, grace comes out to view, the eternal fountain of the whole. On the part of man, also, we have repenting, believing, confessing, offering, calling on the name of the Lord, and walking with God.

**9.** The close of the preceding document introduces the opening topic of this one. The same rule applies to all that have gone before. The generations of the skies and the land (ch. 2 : 4) are introduced by the finishing of the skies and the land (2 : 1); the generations of man in the line of Seth (5 : 1), by the birth of Seth (4 : 25); and now the generations of Noah, by the notice that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. The narrative here also, as usual, reverts to a point of time before the stage of affairs described in the close of the preceding passage. Yet there is nothing here that seems to indicate

a new author. The previous paragraph is historical, and closely connected with the end of the fourth chapter ; and it suitably prepares for the proceedings of Noah, under the divine direction, on the eve of the deluge. We have now a recapitulation of the agent and the occasion, and then the divine commission and its execution. Noah is here characterized by two new and important epithets,—*just* and *perfect*. To be just is to be right in point of law, and thereby entitled to all the blessings of the acquitted and justified. The perfect is the tested in holiness. M.——He was perfect, not with a sinless perfection, but a perfection of sincerity ; and it is well for us, that by virtue of the covenant of grace, upon the score of Christ's righteousness, sincerity is accepted as our Gospel perfection. He *walked with God*, as Enoch had done before him ; he was not only honest, but devout : he *walked*, that is, he acted with God, as one always under his eye ; he lived a life of communion with God ; it was his constant care to conform himself to the will of God, to please him, and to approve himself to him. God looks down upon those with an eye of favor, who sincerely look up to him with an eye of faith. But that which crowns his character is, that thus he was and thus he did in *his* generation, in that corrupt, degenerate age in which his lot was cast. It is easy to be religious when religion is in fashion ; but it is an evidence of strong faith and resolution, to swim against a stream to heaven, and to appear for God when no one else appears for him : so Noah did, and it is upon record to his immortal honor. H.

That there was during this period a growing apprehension of the Divine purpose in redemption among the obedient, appears plain from what is told us of Enoch and of Noah, that they "walked with God," or in his ways ; and of the preaching and translation of Enoch, and the preaching of Noah. The statement in Heb. 11 : that "these all died in faith, and were persuaded of the promises and embraced them," can only mean that they had such knowledge of God's purpose in redemption so far as then revealed as to be workers together with him in faith. *Andrews.*

**11, 12.** Three times the sacred text repeats it, that the earth was corrupt, adding that it was full of violence, just as if the watchful eye of the Lord, who "looked upon the earth," had been searching and trying the children of men, and was lingering in pity over it, before judgment was allowed to descend. A. E.

Our most veritable, though saddest, impressions of man's greatness, we derive from the magnificent ruin he displays. In that ruin we distinguish fallen powers, that lie as broken pillars on the ground ; temples of beauty, whose scarred and shattered walls still indicate their ancient, original glory ; summits covered with broken stones, where the palaces of high thought and great aspiration stood, and righteous courage went up to maintain the citadel of the mind, —all a ruin now, "archangel ruined." And exactly this is the legitimate impression of the scripture representations of man, as apostate from duty and God. Thoughtfully regarded, all exaggerations and contending theories apart, it is as if they were showing us the original dignity of man, from the magnificence of the ruin in which he lies. How sublime a creature must that be, call him either man or demon, who is able to confront the Almighty and tear himself away from his throne. And, as if to forbid our taking his deep misery and shame as tokens of contempt, imagining that a creature so humiliated is inherently weak and low, the first men are shown us living out a thousand years of lustful energy, and braving the Almighty in strong defiance to the last. "The earth also is corrupt before God, and the earth is filled with violence." We look, as it were, upon a race of Titans, broken loose from order, and making war upon God and each other ; beholding, in their outward force, a type of that original majesty which pertains to the moral nature of a being endowed with a self-determining liberty, capable of choices against God, and thus of a character in evil that shall be his own. They fill the earth, even up to the sky, with wrath and the demoniacal tumult of their wrongs, till God can suffer them no longer, sending forth his flood to sweep them from the earth. *Bushnell.*

**13.** Miraculous interpositions were necessary in order to prevent the termination of all progress ; and they were to be expected, as parts of a plan from which the Deity has never departed. The world itself originated in miracle ; and contains in its bosom the memorials of having been, at distant intervals, the theatre of successive creations. Man himself, originated in miracle, is preconfigured for the recognition of the supernatural as truly as he is for the belief of the natural. Hence, when it occurred, as in the translation of Enoch, it brought nothing new into human belief ; the doctrine was there before. When an inspired communication was made, the Divine Being was but continuing the employment of a method for the impartation of *religious* knowledge, to which man had owed, at first, the elements of even *material* knowledge—

the Parent was but once more speaking to his children on affairs of great urgency ; and hence the revelation did but corroborate the pre-existing fears of the wicked and the hopes of the righteous. The seasons selected for such interpositions, too, would be such as to invite, or to excite, the expectation of them ; and, when they did occur, so adapted would they be to the exigencies of the time, as to stop nothing natural, and to set nothing unnatural in motion ; their tendency being only to impair the force of the evils which threatened to destroy all human progress, and to give to that progress continuity and impulse.

"All observation and experience are against a miracle," says the sceptic. "Nature is uniform in her operations. The laws of the human mind compel my disbelief." The error lies in confounding that inner circle called the course of nature, with that larger outer circle—the course of providence, which preceded nature and encompassed it ; which originated it, employs it, and, at distant intervals, adds to it, or modifies it, at pleasure. That no similar event has taken place may be true. But is that sufficient to prove that nothing like it ever will or can occur? Experience is, in this sense, against everything till it occurs. The existence of man himself was contrary to all that had previously taken place on the earth. If the proposition that nothing will take place but what has taken place is to be admitted, it must be because it is a principle of the Divine Being ; and if it be such at present, it must ever have been such ; and if it has ever been such, even before creation began, no creation could ever have taken place. There was no precedent for the creation of a world, any more than there is now said for its destruction. Thus, the objection becomes an intellectual absurdity. J. H.

**14. Make an Ark.** It was an enormous undertaking, demanding all the cutting instruments and metallic implements already invented. Observe the material, as congruous to the region as was the shittim or acacia wood of the tabernacle to the region of Sinai. The "gopher" wood of the ark is admitted to be pitch-wood, therefore light and comparatively easy of working. Lexicographers, from the similarity of the consonant elements, incline to suggest specifically the cypress. Now the cypress abounds throughout Asia Minor. It grows to the height of one hundred and twenty feet. Nothing could be more suitable. The pine also abounds in these regions. The cypress or the pine would have furnished the pitch for the caulking ; or if we suppose the pitch to be bitumen, we are reminded of the extensive petroleum works now carried on at Buku on the Caspian, and of the bitumen springs still flowing at Is on the Euphrates. And the olive tree of which the dove brought a fresh-plucked leaf, grows also in Armenia, and is found on the south side of Mount Ararat at its foot. S. C. B.

**15.** Of the shape of the ark nothing is said ; but its dimensions are given. It was to be 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height. Taking 21 inches for the cubit, the ark would be 525 feet in length, 87 feet 6 inches in breadth, and 52 feet 6 inches in height. Two objects only were aimed at in its construction : the one that it should have ample stowage, and the other that it should be able to keep steady upon the water. P. S.——The ARK was neither intended nor suited for *nautical* purposes. It was not meant for *navigation*, but for *carrying freight*, for which it was much more suited than if it had been constructed according to the principles of shipbuilding. K.

**16.** The interpretation of Gesenius seems evidently the true, viz. that the unusual word translated "window" (the word in ch. 8 : 6 is quite another word) means really a set of windows, a window course, a system of lighting. E. H. B ——Noah was to make, *i. e.*, to provide for giving, light to the ark. This might be done by a series of windows or by leaving a vertical space on each side, on the ridge of the roof, and covering this on the top. *Alf.*

Though there were many rooms in the ark, THERE WAS ONLY ONE DOOR. It is said, "And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof." And so, there is only one door into the ark of our salvation, and that is Christ. "He that cometh not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." *Spurgeon.*

**17.** How impressively did the Divine prediction of the flood proclaim the calm, certain, and majestic movements of justice! The world probably then, as now, derided the idea of its destruction ; scientifically demonstrated, in its way, the physical impossibility of a general deluge ; proved historically that such an event never had taken place ; and congratulated itself on the superior notions which it entertained of the Divine benevolence—notions which rendered it politely horrified at the bare mention of such a catastrophe. But on went the note of preparation, in the building of the Ark, without pause or relaxation. And many a sinner would see in the coming crisis, a prediction, by fact, of the last judgment. And the "preacher of righteousness" would solemnly point to it as an

instalment of the great doom predicted by Enoch (Jude 14, 15). J. H.

**18.** God here makes Noah the *man of his covenant*, another Hebrew periphrasis of a friend. *But with thee will I establish my covenant.* The covenant of *providence;* that the course of nature shall be continued to the end of time, notwithstanding the interruption which the flood would give to it ; this promise was immediately made to Noah and his sons (ch. 9 : 8, etc.). They were as trustees for all this part of the creation, and a great honor was thereby put upon him and his. The covenant of *grace;* that God would be to him a God, and that out of his seed God would take to himself a people. When God makes a covenant, he establishes it, he makes it sure, he makes it good ; his are everlasting covenants. The covenant of grace has in it the recompense of singular services, and the fountain and foundation of all distinguishing favors ; we need desire no more, either to make up our losses for God, or to make up a happiness for us in God, than to have his covenant established with us. H.

We find the key to this great transaction in this saying, With thee will I establish my covenant, etc., in the saying of the apostle (Heb. 11 : 4) : "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house ; by which he condemned the world, and became the heir of righteousness which is by faith." The whole transaction is thus at once lifted above the sphere of the natural. It is no mere record of how a great natural disaster once befell the earth after 1600 years of the reign of man upon it, through some upheaving of the Caspian or other seas. It is the account of how, at the close of the first cycle of the Adam race the corruption became so enormous that judgment ceased to linger and damnation ceased to slumber. It was a transaction that has had no parallel, nor will have until another judgment by fire shall fall upon the earth and the heavens shall melt with fervent heat. Noah, as the end of that cycle, becomes also the Adam—the second ancestor of the human race. Hence, as with Adam, God entered into a covenant of life for himself personally and the race, as represented in him ; so now, when about to visit judgment upon man in this his second fall and wind up that first cycle and old order of things, he declares to him whom he has chosen as the germ for the new race, "With *thee* will I establish my covenant," as before with Adam. This covenant idea is not only the scripture form, but the sublimest form of setting forth the relations between God the Saviour and man the sinner. The very aim and end of the representation is, to distinguish this revealed religion from mere natural religion. The very fact that God has endowed man with moral, rational and religious faculties, at once puts him above the plane of nature, to be operated upon by mere natural laws as the other creatures and works of God. And, accordingly, the Creator is represented as entering into covenant with him—that is, revealing himself as the Infinite Personality binding Himself with the finite supernatural being. Thus man is put above the sphere of mere natural law and natural right, as deducted from the universal nature of things. While, indeed, by reason of his physical nature, still bound like the animal and other creatures of God, yet God gives him more than a natural right by making him the subject of special promises to which the Author of nature binds Himself. The very term "covenant" (*co-veniens*) signifies in Scripture a coming together of the divine and the human spirit. It involves, therefore, a higher class of ideas than those of nature and natural things. In nature the ideas are of forces, gravities, attractions, affinities, appetites, instincts, etc. In grace the ideas are of covenant parties, promises, agreements, oaths, conditions, fulfilments, perfectness, penalties, rewards, etc. The tendency of the ethics and theology of our times to base the relations of God and man upon the "nature of things," and to determine the place of man by philosophy, obscures all the higher glory of positive law covenant, promise, and the dignity of the human soul as capable, through faith, of standing in forensic and current relations with God. This modern tendency is rather to trace man's relations to the universe than to God the sovereign of the universe. Hence the saying to Noah here, with *thee* I will establish my covenant (literally make my covenant *stand*), implies that the covenant with Adam had been impaired ; it had fallen down as a covenant with the race and had need now to be raised up. Hence as Tayler Lewis, by whom these thoughts have been suggested, very properly says : "There is no *religion* without this idea of a personal covenant with a personal God, and therefore all such views as those of Comte, Mill and Spencer are for all moral and religious purposes wholly atheistical. They acknowledge no personality in God ; they cannot use the personal pronoun in speaking of him or to him. It may be said in truth that all *religion* is a covenant, even when religion appears in its most perverted form. It has some appearance of being in the

very etymology of the Latin word. Cicero makes it form '*re lego*,' but a better derivation would be from '*religo*,' to *bind, bind back*--religio is a positive bond (higher than nature) between straying, fallen man and his Maker" S. R.

The building of the ark commenced when Noah was four hundred and eighty years old; that is, before any of his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, had been born,--in fact, just twenty years before the birth of Shem. Thus the great faith of Noah appeared not only in building an ark in the midst of a scoffing and unbelieving generation, and that against all human probability of its ever being needed, and one hundred and twenty years before it was actually required, but in providing room for "his sons" and his "sons' wives," while as yet he himself was childless! A. E.

**19.** The distinction between clean and unclean animals--of the former of which seven of every sort, and of the latter one pair, were to be selected—had even before the flood grown up among men as the offspring of custom, and the closer observation of nature, and had also received the divine sanction. Only the former sort were permitted to be sacrificed to the Lord, and (after or perhaps even before the flood) used as food by man, and hence a greater number of them, seven pairs (the sacred number of the covenant), were to be taken into the ark. Noah was to transfer from the old to the new world, not his mere life, but the pure worship of God, of which sacrifices formed a part. C. G. B.

**20.** Only the animals necessary to man, or peculiar to the region covered by the deluge, required to be included in the ark. It seems likely that wild animals in general were not included. It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot calculate the number of animals preserved in the ark, or compare the space they would require with its recorded dimensions. We may rest assured that there was accommodation for all that needed to be there. M.

**22. Thus did Noah.** He prepared the ark; and during one hundred and twenty years preached righteousness to that sinful generation (2 Pet. 2 : 5). And this we are informed (1 Pet. 3 : 18, 19, etc.) he did by the *Spirit of Christ:* for it was only through *him*, that the doctrine of repentance could ever be successfully preached. The people in Noah's time are represented as *shut up in prison*, arrested and condemned by God's justice, but graciously allowed the space of one hundred and twenty years to repent in. A. C.——Doubtless Noah continued his "preaching of righteousness," especially as occasions arose from the scoffing curiosity of those who watched his work; but that work preached louder still. And so "the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." But it waited in vain. The unheeded warning, as is usual, only plunged men into greater carelessness. They went on, "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and knew not till the flood came and took them all away." P. S.

Methinks I see those monstrous sons of Lamech coming to Noah, and asking him what he means by that strange work; whether he means to sail upon the dry land. To whom when he reports God's purpose and his, they go away laughing at his idleness, and tell one another, in sport, that too much holiness hath made him mad: yet cannot they all flout Noah out of his faith; he preaches, and builds, and finishes. Doubtless more hands went to this work than his: many a one wrought upon the ark, which yet was not saved in the ark. Our outward works cannot save us without our faith; we may help to save others and perish ourselves. what a wonder of mercy is this I here see! One poor family called out of a world, and as it were eight grains of corn fanned from a whole barnful of chaff. *Bp. H.*

He "built an ark to the saving of his house." Here was faith, first, in God's warning--the flood will certainly come; here was faith too in God's promise, or rather in God's command implying a promise—"If I build the ark he has commanded, it will save me when the flood comes." And when a sinner flies for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ, his appointed Saviour, it is faith that leads him to Christ, and it is exactly thus his faith works. He has been taught at last that God really means something when he threatens destruction to sinful men, and, at the same time, that he may trust his mercy for salvation when, in obedience to his command, he seeks salvation in his Son. "There is the danger," says God, "and there is the deliverance;" the sinner through grace believes him, and he is seen fleeing from the danger to the great deliverance. *C. Bradley.*

# Section 31.

## ENTERING THE ARK. FLOOD, 150 DAYS.

GENESIS 7 : 1–24.

1 AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark ; for thee have I
2 seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee
seven and seven, the male and his female ; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male
3 and his female ; of the fowl also of the air, seven and seven, male and female : to keep seed
4 alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the
earth forty days and forty nights ; and every living thing that I have made will I destroy from
5 off the face of the ground. And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.
6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And
7 Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because
8 of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and
9 of every thing that creepeth upon the ground, there went in two and two unto Noah into the
10 ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah. And it came to pass after the seven days,
11 that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in
the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the foun-
12 tains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain
13 was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and
Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his
14 sons with them into the ark ; they, and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after
their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind, and every
15 fowl after its kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two
16 and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and
17 female of all flesh, as God commanded him : and the LORD shut him in. And the flood was
forty days upon the earth ; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up
18 above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and increased greatly upon the earth ; and the
19 ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth ;
20 and all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits
21 upward did the waters prevail ; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that
moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every creeping thing that creepeth
22 upon the earth, and every man : all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of
23 all that was in the dry land, died. And every living thing was destroyed which was upon the
face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping thing, and fowl of the heaven ; and
they were destroyed from the earth : and Noah only was left, and they that were with him
24 in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

**Locality of the Flood.** There is a remarkable portion of the globe, chiefly on the Asiatic Continent, though it extends into Europe, and which is nearly equal to all Europe in extent ; whose rivers (some of them the Volga, Oural, Sihon, Kour, and the Amoo, of great size) do not fall into the ocean, but, on the contrary, are all *turned inward*, losing themselves, in the eastern part of the tract, in the lakes of a rainless district ; in the western parts, into such seas as the Caspian and the Aral. In this region there are extensive districts still under the level of the ocean. Vast plains, white with salt, and charged with sea-shells, show that the Caspian Sea was, at no distant period, greatly more extensive than it is now. With the well-known facts, then, before us, regarding this depressed Asiatic region, let us suppose that the human family, amounting to several millions, were congregated in that tract of country, which, extending eastward from the modern Ararat to far beyond the Sea of Aral, includes the original Caucasian centre of the race. Let us suppose that, the hour of judgment having arrived, the land began gradually to sink (as the tract in the Run of Cutch sank in the year 1819) equably for 40 days at the rate of about 400 feet per day,—a rate not twice greater than that at which the tide rises in the Strait of Magellan, and which would have rendered

itself apparent as but a persistent inward flowing of the sea. The depression, which, by extending to the Euxine Sea and the Persian Gulf on the one hand and the Gulf of Finland on the other, would open up by three separate channels the "fountains of the great deep," and which included an area of 2000 miles each way, would, at the end of the fortieth day, be sunk in its centre to the depth of 1600 feet,—sufficient to bury the loftiest mountains of the district; and yet, having a gradient of declination of but 16 feet per mile, the contour of its hills and plains would remain apparently what they had been before, and the doomed inhabitants would see but the water rising along the mountain-sides, and one refuge after another swept away. *Hugh Miller.*

The preceding chapter accounts for a period of 120 years. In the present chapter we reach the end of that period. The ark has been built in the prescribed form with due preparation and capacity. Noah has done according to all that God had commanded him, and now the Lord gives to Noah fuller directions concerning the animals which he was to take with him.

**2, 3.** The boundary line between clean and unclean animals is marked by nature. Every tribe of mankind would distinguish between the sheep and the hyena, between the dove and the vulture. Whether animal food was eaten before the Deluge or not, it is certain that flocks and herds were fed for the sake of their milk and wool, and that of them victims were offered in sacrifice. This alone would separate between the clean and the unclean. It is not improbable, that the distinction even of the names "clean and unclean" had been fully established by custom, long before it was recognized and ratified by the Law. E. H. B.—Many things, established afterward in the law of Moses, obtained before that law, and were generally practised by the worshippers of God: for example; *sacrifices* (Gen. 4 : 8, 13), the paying of *tithe* (Gen. 14), *circumcision* (Gen. 17), the *right of primogeniture* (Gen. 25), *making vows* (Gen. 28), *marrying* the brother's wife (Gen. 38 : 8). And some of those things, which Moses forbade, were forbidden before his law: as the *eating* of *blood*, and *murder*, which was a capital crime before the law (Gen. 9 : 4, 6). And there is no doubt but the difference of clean and unclean beasts, with respect to sacrifice, was known and observed before the Law of Moses, and before the Flood. *Bp. Kidder.*

There remains in these commands concerning food *the* general truth for all times, that everything outward should by emblem lead us to think of what is inward—that the external symbolic purity, like every other discipline and custom, especially in the service of God, ought to prepare the way for the life of true holiness; and that therefore we can never regard with indifference the emblems of our own sins in the world of creation, nor anything, indeed, which in nature serves to remind us of death and destruction, and of the wild power of unbridled lust. *Ger.*

**4.** He went into the ark, upon notice that the flood would come after seven days, though, probably, as yet there appeared no visible sign of its approach, but all continued serene and clear; for as he prepared the ark by faith in the warning given that the flood would *come*, so he went into it by faith in this warning that it would come *quickly*, though he did not see that the second causes had yet begun to work. In every step he took he walked by faith, and not by sense. H.

**7.** His ark was builded and the time was come that he should enter in. There was something formidable in that final and conclusive step. But the patriarch took it. He felt that this contrivance was as mighty as the Divine command, and he rejoiced to be the prisoner of a promise-keeping God. Fearless and unfalter ing he stepped in, and felt that he was now the guest of God, and need fear no further ill. And in obeying the Divine command and casting himself on the Providence of God, the believer is like the patriarch entering the dark and unproved ark. He knows not what shall be the issue. There is no crevice by which he can discern the course along which he is drifting; no aperture to cheer him with the sight of emerging peaks or nearer land; no window except one overhead, to teach him that he must look up and look no other way. And many a time the winds are loud and the waters high. But his heart keeps up, till, after long waiting and many a prayer, one day the door opes and lets him out on a large and wealthy land, and he finds how good it is to be piloted blindfold to such a pleasant place. To every age the history of Noah has been a burning and shining light, and the great lesson it has taught is the *faithfulness* of God, the wisdom of simply trusting Him, and promptly complying with His commands; and it tells to every prisoner of hope, and every pilgrim in the dark, The Lord knoweth how to deliver them who put their trust in Him. *Hamilton.*

**8, 9. Of beasts and fowls there went in.** He who first miraculously brought them to Adam, that he might give them their

names, now brings them to Noah, that he may preserve their lives. A. C.

**11. Were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.** It cannot be imagined that this is a philosophical explanation of the flood. The use of Scripture is always to describe the phenomena of nature, not to trace their hidden causes. The words here written express only the effect produced upon man's senses. There was a flood of waters from above and beneath. E. H. B.——The beautiful figure of the windows of the skies being opened is preceded by the equally striking one of the fountains of the great deep being broken up. This was the chief source of the flood. A change in the level of the land was accomplished. The waters of the great deep now broke their bounds, flowed in on the sunken surface, and drowned the world of man, with all its inhabitants. **12.** The accompanying heavy rain of forty days and nights was only a subsidiary instrument in the deluging of the land. We may imagine the sinking of the land to have been so gradual as to occupy the whole of these forty days of rain. There is an awful magnificence in this constant uplifting of the billows over the yielding land. M.

The Bible does not give us a single picture of the dreadful scenes that followed. It merely tells us that the tops of the mountains were covered, and that every living creature died It leaves us to conceive the dreadful realities which that statement implies. W. G. B.——The narrative is vivid and forcible, though entirely wanting in that sort of description which in a modern historian or poet would have occupied the largest space. We see nothing of the death-struggle ; we hear not the cry of despair ; we are not called upon to witness the frantic agony of husband and wife, and parent and child, as they fled in terror before the rising waters. Nor is a word said of the sadness of the one righteous man who, safe himself, looked upon the destruction which he could not avert. But an impression is left upon the mind with peculiar vividness from the very simplicity of the narrative, and it is that of utter desolation. This is heightened by the repetition and contrast of two ideas. On the one hand, we are reminded no less than six times in the narrative who the tenants of the ark were, the favored and rescued few ; and, on the other hand, the total and absolute blotting out of everything else is not less emphatically dwelt upon. *Perowne.*

Were there only eight saved? There were thousands, millions sought. Nor is it justice to God to forget how long a period of patience, and preaching, and warning, and compassion, preceded that dreadful deluge. Long before the clouds rained down death ; long before the floor and solid pavement of this earth, under the prodigious agencies at work, broke up, like the deck of a leaking ship, and the waters rushed from below, to meet the waters from above, and sink a guilty world ; long before the time when the ark floated away by tower and town, and those crowded hill-tops, where frantic groups had clustered, and amid prayers and curses, and shrieks and shouts, hung out their signals of distress—very long before this, God had been calling an impenitent world to repentance. Had they no warning in Noah's preaching? Was there nothing to alarm them in the very sight of the ark, as story rose upon story ; and nothing in the sound of those ceaseless hammers to waken all but the dead? It was not till mercy's arm grew weary ringing the warning bell, that God "poured out his fury" on them. The ark stood useless for years, a huge laughing-stock for the scoffer's wit ; it stood till it was covered with the marks of age, and its builders with the contempt of the world ; and many a sneer had those men to bear, as pointing to the serene heavens above and an empty ark below, the question was put, "Where is the promise of his coming?" Most patient God ! Then, as now, thou wert slow to punish —"waiting to be gracious." *Guthrie.*

**13.** Though men were to be reduced to so small a number, and it would be very desirable to have the world speedily repeopled, yet Noah's sons were to have each of them but one wife, which strengthens the arguments against having many wives ; for from the beginning of this new world it was not so ; as, at first, God made, so now he kept alive, but one woman for one man (Matt. 19 : 4, 8). H.

**16. And the Lord shut him in.** By some providential or supernatural agency the door of the ark, which could not have been secured with pitch or bitumen by Noah, was secured and made water-tight. E. H. B.——As he shut HIM *in*, so he shut the OTHERS *out*. God had waited one hundred and twenty years upon that generation : they did not repent ; they filled up the measure of their iniquities, and then wrath came upon them to the uttermost. A. C.——These two ideas of *closing* and *excluding* are both conveyed by the original as may be seen (Ps. 35 : 3 ; 2 Kings 4 : 4, 5). There is probably at the same time a latent implication that without such protection the ark would have been liable to a violent assault from the desper-

ate multitudes, who, from the character given of that generation, were undoubtedly capable of the most flagrant outrages. And let it be considered that something very nearly resembling this will be acted over again. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man." Not only shall the world, as then, be full of dissipation, but the concluding scene is described in nearly the same words, "And they that were ready went in, *and the door was shut!*" *Bush.*

There is room enough in Christ for all comers. Those that by faith come into Christ, the Ark, shall by the power of God be shut in, and kept as in a stronghold *by the power of God* (1 Pet. 1 : 5). God put Adam into paradise, but he did not shut him in, and so he threw himself out ; but when he put Noah into the ark, he shut him in, and so, when he brings a soul to Christ, he insures the salvation : it is not in our own keeping, but in the Mediator's hand. The door of mercy will shortly be shut against those that now make light of it. *Now knock, and it shall be opened ;* but the time will come when it shall not (Luke 13 : 25). H.

**11-20.** With a graphic minuteness we have the exact year, the month, the day of the month, when the great rain commenced upon the earth, and Noah went into the ark. Were ever the pictorial and the statistical combined in so life-like a description? Surely the man who first painted this scene must have been in that ark when it was "lifted up," and went walking forth upon the waters ; he must have been an eye-witness of that irresistibly rising wave, those disappearing hills, all ending at last in that sky-bounded waste.

**19. Under the whole heaven.** Who that has any true love or reverence for the Bible would raise an argument, on these words, either for or against the absolute universality of the deluge, or think of interpreting the writer at all by either our modern geography or our modern astronomy! It was all of earth he knew, or that was known to Moses after him. The divine Spirit that employed his vivid conception, as well as his vivid language, has given it to us as the measure and the assurance of his truthfulness ; and it is just that truthfulness which, in such an account as this, is of the highest critical value. T. L.

**19. All the high mountains.** Similar terms are abundantly used where they must certainly be taken in a *limited* though wide extent. To notice only passages in the Pentateuch itself, although the New Testament supplies even stronger examples : compare Gen. 41 : 56, 57 ; Ex. 9 : 6, 10, 19-22, 25 ; 10 : 5, 15 ; Deut. 2 : 25. *Macdonald.*

**Upon the land.** The land is to be understood of the portion of the earth's surface known to man. This, with an unknown margin beyond it, was covered with the waters. But this is all that Scripture warrants us to assert. Concerning the distant parts of Europe, the continents of Africa, America, or Australia, we can say nothing. *All the high hills were covered.* Not a hill was above water within the horizon of the spectator or of man. **20. Fifteen cubits upward.** This was half the depth of the ark. It may have taken this draught of water to float it. If so, its grounding on a hill under water would indicate the depth of water on its summit. The gradual rise of the waters was accomplished by the depression of the land, aided, possibly, by a simultaneous elevation of the bed of the ocean. The water, by the mere necessity of finding its level, overflowed the former dry land. The sobriety and historical veracity of the narrative are strikingly exhibited in the moderate height to which the waters are said to have risen above the ancient hills. M.

**21. All flesh died—and every man.** At length there was the entire surface of the solid globe *without sin!*—But to think that it could not be so but by being *without men!* The numbers of men—the towns—the camps—the arts, the works, the revels, the crimes,—the very face of nature itself?—All swept from the creation! A deserted, desolate planet that *had* been populous in God's creation! Nothing short of having gone to another world could be so strange. And for SIN this mighty destruction had passed over the world! J. F.——*If future punishment for sin be a myth, the past judgments of God are without import.* If men are not held to an accountability beyond the grave—that accountability to give an impress to their future—then see the necessary transformation into benefits of conspicuous displays of God's judicial wrath. The flood lifted to heaven the souls of the wave-washed multitudes covered by its foam—those waters, the retribution due to idolatry and sensuality—while, as his reward for piety, Noah was imprisoned in a floating ark, which constituted his only inheritance. *Leech.*

The outward results appear to have been twofold—on the one side preservation, on the other destruction. But when we look a little more closely we perceive that there was properly but one object aimed at in the dispensation. That object was, in the words of Peter, "the saving of Noah and his house"—saving them as the spiritual seed of God. But saving them from

what? Undoubtedly from that which formed the real element of danger—the corruption, enmity, and violence of ungodly men. It was this which wasted the Church of God, and brought it to the verge of destruction. All was ready to perish. It was to save him—and with him, the cause of God—from this source of imminent danger and perdition, that the flood was sent; and it could only do so by effectually separating between him and the seed of evil-doers—engulfing *them* in ruin, and sustaining *him* uninjured in his temporary home. The direct and immediate object was the extermination of that wicked race whose heaven-daring impiety and hopeless impenitence was the real danger that menaced the cause and people of God,—"the destroying of those (to use the language that evidently refers to it in Rev. 11 : 18) who destroyed the earth." P. F.

**23. Only Noah was left.** The Divine patience had "endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fit for destruction." For a hundred and twenty years the seasons had revolved. Only the prophetic ark arose; proclaiming that every added day was a winged messenger from the mercy-seat inviting men to repent. As if lingering to see whether some ground might not yet appear for withdrawing the doom, whether the world's last consummating sin might not be indefinitely delayed, "the long-suffering of God had waited while the ark was a preparing." But man's intense depravity was more than a match for even such patience. And now the time had come when the evil must be swept from the earth to make way for yet greater good. The planet over which "the morning stars had sang together," and which might still have been floating through the heavens to the same strains—the ark of space—now showed only a solitary vessel in the midst of a shoreless waste of waters, freighted with the hardly-saved wreck of a world departed. But that vessel was conveying into the future the precious germs of a new era of the Divine manifestation. For the human incarnation of the Divine—the great manifestation of God by man, as well as to him—is yet to come. J. H.

Noah *lives;* when all about him were monuments of justice, thousands falling on his right hand and ten thousands on his left, he was a monument of mercy; *only with his eyes might he behold and see the reward of the wicked* (Ps. 91 : 7, 8). *In the floods of great waters, they did not come nigh him* (Ps. 32 : 6). We have reason to think, that while the long-suffering of God waited Noah not only preached to but prayed for that wicked world, and would have turned away the wrath; but his prayers return into his own bosom, and are answered only in his own escape; which is plainly referred to (Ez. 14 : 14), *Noah, Daniel, and Job shall but deliver their own souls.* H.

In vain doth he fly whom God pursues. There is no way to fly from his judgments, but to fly to his mercy by repenting. The faith of the righteous cannot be so much derided as their success is magnified: how securely doth Noah ride out this uproar of heaven, earth and waters! He knew that he which owned the waters would steer him; that he who shut him in would preserve him. How happy a thing is faith! What a quiet safety, what a heavenly peace, doth it work in the soul in the midst of all the inundations of evil! *Bp. H.*—How easily might the Lord have translated Noah as Enoch was translated, and have closed the sad record of humanity with the flood! But, in the midst of judgments, he had purposes of mercy; and he put salvation in contrast with destruction by providing for the safety of his servant and his family, and continuing, through him, at once the line of descent from Adam and the line of promise unto the Saviour. How tender and thoughtful was the care that God took of his servant in all the preparations for his comfort during the time of the flood! And how strong were the faith of Noah and his spirit of obedience, that led him, without hesitation, to undertake so vast a work as building and storing the ark upon the bare command of Jehovah! But, as he rode above that mighty sea, that faith was justified, that righteousness was honored, and his ark became the symbol of refuge and hope to the people of God in all after-ages. J. P. T.

The account of the flood concerns us all. The sin which brought down that judgment is not a thing of the most remote antiquity; it is of our own days, it is here amongst us, it is everywhere. For what does our Lord mean, when He says, "they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage"? He is naming, not occasional crimes which disturb society, but society's most ordinary and most necessary practices; things which are neither crimes nor sins in themselves; things which all may do and must do. It is as if He had said, "They rose in the morning, and lay down to rest at night; they went to their daily work, and were refreshed by their daily recreations; they had their hopes and their enjoyments; they lived as we are living daily." But then our Lord goes on to say, that the end of this life was, that the flood came and destroyed them all: that is, in the emphatic sense of the word death, which it bears when spoken of as God's

judgment, "the end of all these things was death." Such simply is our Lord's language, with no softening or explanation given. Yet we know that he did not mean that because men ate and drank, and married, and bought and sold, and planted and builded, that therefore they were and would be destroyed. We have here the same sort of language which He employs on other occasions; "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep." Yet it is no sin to laugh. "Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall be hungry." Yet it is no sin to be full. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Yet Abraham, the father of the faithful, was rich; and David, the man after God's own heart, had kingly wealth, and kingly state and power also. Why then does our Lord so speak, and that not once only or in one place but on several occasions, as if this manner of speaking were used purposely. We cannot surely be mistaken in believing that He did speak so purposely; that He did mean us to understand that there was a natural danger in the things of which He was speaking, which if left to itself and not earnestly struggled against would most certainly lead to the following judgment; that he who laughed, unless he could laugh in faith, would surely weep; that he who was full, unless he carefully remembered from whom his good things came, would surely be hungry; that they who lived a peaceful, a busy, and a happy life, would be cut off from life eternal, unless they took good heed to live unto God. And further our Lord meant us to see, what experience largely shows, that the things which would take away the poison from laughter, from plenty, from a busy and enjoying life, were not things easily to be procured and at any moment,--things which all when warned of their danger would immediately procure for their safety. *Arnold.*

*Extent of the deluge.* There can be no doubt that the flood was universal, so far as man was concerned: that it extended to all *the then known world.* The literal truth of the narration obliges us to believe that *the whole human race,* except eight persons, perished by the waters of the flood. But the language of the Book of Genesis does not compel us to suppose that the whole surface of the globe was actually covered with water. P. S.——If we carefully consider the nature of the narrative, we shall surely be led to conclude that the deluge is described from the point of view of an eye-witness, not from the point of view of the Omnipotent. That merely is related which actually appeared. The deluge described in Genesis is pictured as it would have presented itself to the eyes of Noah and his family. It is in the highest degree probable that the description is really that which was given by one of such eye-witnesses. The words may certainly mean that the deluge was universal over the whole extent of the world. Yet, if only the inhabited world was inundated, the effect would have been the same to Noah, and would most likely have been described in the same words. *Cook.*

It is not to be supposed that the entire globe of the earth was covered with water. Where was the need of overwhelming those regions in which there were no human beings? It would be highly unreasonable to suppose that mankind had so increased before the deluge as to have penetrated to all the corners of the earth. It is, indeed, not probable that they had extended themselves beyond the limits of Syria and Mesopotamia. Absurd it would be to affirm that the effects of the punishment inflicted upon men alone applied to places in which there were no men. If, then, we should entertain the belief that not so much as the hundredth part of the globe was overspread with water, still the deluge would be universal, because the extirpation took effect upon all the part of the globe which was inhabited. If we take this ground, the difficulties which some have raised about the deluge fall away as inapplicable, and mere cavils; and irreligious persons have no reason left them for doubting the truth of the Holy Scriptures. *Matthew Poole,* 1670.——In fact, some enemies to the Gospel have seen the historical proof of the deluge to be so strong that they have confessed it to be irresistible. M. Boué, an eminent writer and scoffer of the French school, has said, "I shall be vexed to be thought stupid enough to deny that an inundation or catastrophe has taken place in the world, or rather in the region inhabited by the antediluvians. To me this seems to be as really a fact in history as the reign of Cæsar at Rome." *King.*

The deluge was evidently a *local* convulsion. The object, that of destroying the human race and the animal population of its peculiar centre of creation, the preservation of specimens of these creatures in the ark, and the physical requirements of the case, shut us up to this conclusion, which is now accepted by the best biblical expositors and which inflicts no violence on the terms of the record. Viewed in this light, the phenomena recorded in the Bible in connection with geological probabilities lead us to infer that the physical agencies evoked by the

Divine power to destroy this ungodly race, were a subsidence of the region they inhabited so as to admit the oceanic waters, and extensive atmospherical disturbances connected with that subsidence, and perhaps with the elevation of neighboring regions. *Dawson.*

Nor is it possible to conceive of an assemblage of all the living creatures of the different regions of the earth at any one spot. The Polar bear surely could not survive a journey from his native icebergs to the sultry plains of Mesopotamia ; nor could the animals of South America have reached these except by travelling the whole length, northward, of North America, and then, after miraculously crossing Behring's Strait, having pressed, westward, across the whole breadth of Asia, a continent larger than the moon. Or, how could tropical creatures find supplies of food in passing through such a variety of climates, and over vast spaces of hideous desert? *Geikie.*

That the deluge was of limited extent geographically, and not universal, may be fairly assumed on the following grounds: (1.) The moral reasons for a deluge do not seem to require it to be universal, since obviously that corrupt generation whose sins demanded such a judgment did not overspread all the continents and lands of the globe, but appear to have been confined within a quite limited area in Western Asia. (2.) While on the one hand we may not limit the miraculous power of the Almighty ; on the other hand, it is not legitimate to assume an expenditure of miraculous power indefinitely beyond what the occasion demands. This objection is designed to apply, not specially to the supply of water requisite to flood the whole earth at once, for there is water enough in the oceans and seas to submerge the continents, provided only that the ocean beds be temporarily uplifted and the continents relatively depressed : but it does apply with great force to the preservation of the living animals and plants of the whole world. The narrative assumes that the deluge will destroy the land animals and the fowls of the air unless they are protected in the ark. It also gives us the dimensions of the ark, and leaves us to estimate proximately how many could be saved alive in it. The narrative, therefore, does not authorize us to resort to miracle for the preservation of these animal races. Now it is entirely certain that only an exceedingly small part of all the land animals, insects and birds of the whole world were saved in the ark. Men versed in natural science estimate the living species of vertebrate animals at 21,000 ; of articulates, 300,000 — numbers by far too great to be provided for in Noah's ark. Yet again : To a great extent the "fauna" (as they are called)—the animal species of the several continents—differ widely from each other. South America has its families, many of them unknown to other continents ; Australia has its special group, and Africa its own. It is simply incredible that all or even the mass of these animals came to Noah and were preserved in the ark. If they had been destroyed by the flood, there should be traces of their sudden annihilation in the drift of that flood, and geological research might trace the introduction of new races by special creation to repeople those continents. No such line of proofs for a universal deluge is found. The absence of such traces of destruction and of new creation makes it far more than probable that the flood was limited in extent and not universal. Still further it is urged against a universal deluge—and for aught that appears conclusively—that volcanic cones exist—of Etna in Sicily and of Auvergne in Southern France—which, being composed of loose scoriæ and ashes, must have been washed away by any deluge that should reach them. The cones of Etna are estimated to be 12,000 years old. (3.) The apparently universal language of the narrative may be readily explained as other similar language must be in the Scriptures, without assuming a range of meaning beyond the writer's personal knowledge. The writer of this narrative speaks *as an eye-witness*, especially of the great rain ; of the ark borne up upon the waters ; of the surging back and forth of the billows, and of their covering "the high hills under the whole heaven," *i.e.* as far as the eye could reach. The same style of universal language appears frequently in the Scriptures, yet subject to limitations from the known nature of the case ; *e.g.* Deut. 2 : 25 ; Acts 2 : 5 ; Matt. 3 : 5. Of the sin it is said repeatedly—"The *earth* was corrupt before God ;" "the *earth* was filled with violence." Obviously this same "*earth*," to the same geographical extent and not apparently anything more, was destroyed by the flood. There is every reason to suppose that at this time both the righteous descendants of Seth and the wicked descendants of Cain were living in the great basin of the Euphrates and the Tigris—with great probability not reaching out beyond the area bounded by the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, the Caspian, Black, Mediterranean and Red Seas. This, therefore, we may assume to have been the area submerged by this deluge, and we have no occasion to look for its traces beyond these limits. H. C.

*Traditions of the Deluge.* The evidence shows a consentient belief among members of *all* the great races into which ethnologists have divided mankind. Among the *Semites*, the Babylonians and the Hebrews ; among the *Hamites*, the Egyptians , among the *Aryans*, the Indians, Armenians, Phrygians, Lithuanians, Goths, Celts, and Greeks ; among the *Turanians*, the Chinese, Mexicans, Red Indians, and Polynesian islanders, held the belief, which has thus the character of a universal tradition—a tradition of which but one rational account can be given, namely, that it embodies the recollection of a fact in which all mankind was concerned. It is remarkably confirmatory of the Biblical narrative to find that it unites details scattered up and down the various traditional accounts, but nowhere else found in combination. Altogether, the conclusion is irresistibly forced upon us that the Hebrew is the authentic narrative, of which the remainder are more or less corrupted versions. It is impossible to derive the Hebrew account from any of the other stories, while it is quite possible to derive all of them from it. G. R.

A recollection thus precise and concordant cannot be a myth voluntarily invented. No religious or cosmogonic myth presents this character of universality. It must arise from the reminiscence of a real and terrible event, so powerfully impressing the imagination of the first ancestors of our race, as never to have been forgotten by their descendants. Far from being a myth, the Biblical Deluge is a real and historical fact, having, to say the least, left its impress on the ancestors of three races—Aryan or Indo-European, Semitic or Syro-Arabian, Chamitic or Kushite—that is to say, on the three great civilized races of the ancient world, those which constitute the higher humanity—before the ancestors of those races had as yet separated, and in the part of Asia they together inhabited. *Contem. Rev.*——The traditions of the deluge show that there was, as Scripture affirms, a flood by which all mankind except one righteous family were destroyed ; and they prove, in further conformity with the Scripture record, that all the existing tribes and nations of mankind are descended from that one family which survived the flood. The details given in the inscriptions describing the Flood leave no doubt that both the Bible and the Babylonian story describe the same event, and *the Flood becomes the starting-point for the modern world in both histories.* In their main features the two stories fairly agree : as to the wickedness of the antediluvian world, the Divine anger and command to build the ark, its stocking with birds and beasts, the coming of the deluge, the rain and storm, the ark resting on a mountain, trial being made by birds sent out to see if the waters had subsided, and the building of an altar after the flood. All these main facts occur in the same order in both narratives, but when we come to examine the details of these stages in the two accounts, there appear numerous points of difference ; as to the number of people who were saved, the duration of the deluge, the place where the ark rested, the order of sending out the birds, and other similar matters. *G. Smith.*

The Greek tradition of the flood is worthy of special notice. The accounts of it vary, but according to Lucian, the flood was sent as a punishment of the sins of mankind, and the whole race perished, with the exception of Deucalion and his family, he being preserved on account of his piety. Ovid has given a somewhat different and more poetical account of the flood. Even among the native races of Central America Humboldt found distinct traditions of the flood. W. G. B.

In the Assyrian Department of the British Museum is a series of terra-cotta tablets bearing inscriptions in the cuneiform (*i.e.*, wedge-shaped) character, in which the ancient Assyrian writings are engraved, on one set of which this account is found. Their age is thought by the decipherer to be as old as the seventeenth century B.C., but to represent the traditions of a still earlier age. They record, though imperfectly, the dimensions of the ship of refuge ; its bituminous varnish ; its inmates, both human and animal ; the descent of the rain ; the tempest and destruction of life ; the duration of the flood, which it places at six days and nights ; the cessation of the rain and drying of the earth ; and the resting of the ship at a mountain called Nizir. They describe further the sending forth of a dove, a swallow, and a raven ; the going forth of the king from the ship, and his erection of an altar at the foot of the mountain ; a sacrifice offered by him, and its acceptance by the gods ; and lastly, a sort of promise combined with warning, as to the recurrence of Divine visitation in this form by way of punishment for transgression. No one can help seeing how remarkably these inscriptions confirm the Scripture narrative in most respects, and how unaccountable the agreement between them would be except in the supposition that both are founded on a common origin. H. W. P.——When one of the early missionaries to the Sandwich Islands gave an account of Noah and of the flood, the natives

said that an account had come down to them of a general inundation, and that two men escaped it on a small emerging point of a mountain ; but the particulars given by the missionary they had not heard (*Bib. Sac.* xxii. 418). This strange corroboration of the flood from an island of the Pacific, is only one of multitudes of testimonies from the old world, and from the new, and from the islands of the sea, representing a score or more of peoples. *Beach.*

## Section 32.

### WATERS ASSUAGED. NOAH'S OFFERING. PROMISES RENEWED, AND CHARTERS ENLARGED.

GENESIS 8 : 1–22 ; 9 : 1–7.

8 : 1 AND God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him
2 in the ark : and God make a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged ; the
fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from
3 heaven was restrained ; and the waters returned from off the earth continually : and after
4 the end of an hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. And the ark rested in the
5 seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And
the waters decreased continually until the tenth month : in the tenth month, on the first
6 day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. And it came to pass at the end of
7 forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made : and he sent forth
a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.
8 And he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of
9 the ground ; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto
him to the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth : and he put forth his
10 hand, and took her, and brought her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other
11 seven days ; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark ; and the dove came in to
him at eventide ; and, lo, in her mouth an olive leaf pluckt off : so Noah knew that the
12 waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days ; and sent
13 forth the dove ; and she returned not again unto him any more. And it came to pass in
the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters
were dried up from off the earth : and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked,
14 and, behold, the face of the ground was dried. And in the second month, on the seven
and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry.
15 And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons,
16 and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee
17 of all flesh, both fowl, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ;
that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.
18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him : every
19 beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, whatsoever moveth upon the earth, after their
20 families, went forth out of the ark. And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD ; and took
21 of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And
the LORD smelled the sweet savour ; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse
the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from
22 his youth ; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While
the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter,
9 : 1 and day and night shall not cease. And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto
2 them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the
dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air ; with
all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they
3 delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you ; as the green herb have I
4 given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

5 And surely your blood, *the blood* of your lives, will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it : and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I
6 require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed :
7 for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply ; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

**1. The Lord remembered Noah.** He had never been absent from him. Speaking after the manner of men the Lord is said to remember him, whom he had at no time forgotten, when the time had come that he should *manifest* his knowledge of him, his kindness for him, and his remembrance of him. *Kit.*

**3. Returned continually.** "Going and returning ;" such is the expressive idiom of the Hebrew ; it is most pictorial language, and denotes a sort of ebbing subsidence having its intervals of standing and sinking until it reaches the lowest and settled state. T. L.—— In the sixth month the rain probably ceased altogether. Some time before this, the depressing of the ground had reached its lowest point, and the upheaving had set in. This is the main cause of the reflux of the waters. All this is described, as we perceive, according to appearance. It is probable that the former configuration of the surface was not exactly restored. Hence it is vain to seek for a spot retaining the precise conditions of the primitive Eden. The Euphrates and Tigris may substantially remain, but the Pishon and Gihon may have considerably changed. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the prevalence of the waters begins to turn into a positive retreat. M.

**4. The ark rested.** We are told that the ark "rested upon the mountains of Ararat," meaning the mountains of Armenia, for Ararat in biblical geography (2 K. 19 : 37 ; Jer. 51 : 27) is not the name of a mountain, but of a district —the central region, to which the name of Araratia is assigned by the native geographer Moses of Chorene. But nothing is more natural than that the scene of the event should in due course of time be transferred to the loftiest of the mountains of Armenia, and that the name of Ararat should be specially affixed to that one : accordingly all the associations connected with the ark now centre in the magnificent mountain which the native Armenians name *Macis*, and the Turks *Aghri-Tágh*. This is the culminating point of the central range of Armenia, the Abus of the ancients. It rises majestically out of the valley of the Araxes to an elevation of 17,260 feet above the level of the sea, and about 14,350 above the valley, and terminates in a double conical peak, the lower or Lesser Ararat being about 400 feet below the other. The mountain is very steep, as implied in the Turkish name and the summit is covered with eternal snow. Until recently it was believed to be inaccessible, but the summit was gained by Parrot in 1829, and the ascent has been effected since his time. P. S.

**6-13.** How can any serious soul fail to be struck with this strange combination of the minutely familiar and the inexpressibly sublime? Nothing in the most modern times, fictitious or real, could surpass it in this air of simple verity. And in reading this whole story, so simply yet so grandly told, we are impressed, as by a real passing scene, with the belief that there actually was such a man as Noah in the early world, a very righteous, honest man, who had on his mind, whether deceived in his idea of inspiration or not, a real conviction that there was coming such a flood of waters over the whole known land, that, under the influence of this belief, he built a vessel, that he took into it his family and the known animals of the surrounding country, that in all this he religiously regarded himself as prompted by a divine power, that the waters did come, that they rose gradually as is so graphically described, that they as gradually abated, that he sent forth the dove, that she returned with an olive leaf in the evening as is so touchingly told, that he "put forth his hand and took her and pulled her in unto him in the ark," that "he waited other seven days," and finally came forth from the ark on that very month, and day of the month, of which he had made so careful a register for those who were preserved with him, and for those who should be after him upon the earth. T. L.

**9. No rest for the sole of her foot.** Though the heart once gone from God turns continually further away from Him, and moves not toward Him till it be renewed, yet, even in that wandering, it retains that natural relation to God, as its centre, that it hath no true rest elsewhere, nor can by any means find it. It is made for Him, and is therefore still restless till it meet with Him. It is true, the natural man takes much pains to quiet his heart by other things, and digests many vexations with hopes of contentment in the end and accomplishment of some design he hath ; but still the heart misgives. Many times he attains not the thing he

seeks : but if he do, yet he never attains the satisfaction he seeks and expects in it, but only learns from that to desire something further, and still hunts on after a fancy, drives his own shadow before him, and never overtakes it ; and if he did, yet it is but a shadow. And so, in running from God, besides the sad end, he carries an interwoven punishment with his sin, the natural disquiet and vexation of his spirit, fluttering to and fro, and *finding no rest for the sole of his foot ;* the *waters* of inconstancy and vanity *covering the whole face of the earth. Coleridge.*

**11. In her mouth an olive leaf.** What messenger of returning happiness could be more appropriate than a dove, the lovely type of purity and atonement, through the Spirit of God, offering an olive-leaf, the symbol of the renewed fruitfulness of the earth ? *Kalisch.*—— It was a significant and merciful appointment of God's providence that the dove brought a bough from this useful tree, the oil from the fruit of which is an emblem of the grace of the Holy Spirit. *Gerl.*——From this event, the olive branch became the symbol of peace, and the dove the emblem of the Comforter, the messenger of peace. After seven other days, the dove being despatched, returns no more. The number seven figures conspicuously in this narrative. Seven days before the showers commence the command to enter the ark is given ; and at intervals of seven days the winged messengers are sent out. These intervals point evidently to the period of seven days, determined by the six days of creation and the seventh day of rest. M.

**10, 12.** There is strong probable evidence, from the practice of measuring time by weeks, that the Sabbath was never entirely lost sight of, and that in certain families, at least, it continued to be applied to holy purposes. Not only did the original reason of the Sabbatic appointment remain ; it increased with every addition which was made to man's knowledge of God. The impartation of such knowledge to the young would form part of the appropriate employment of the patriarchal Sabbath, as it did subsequently of the Jewish Sabbath, into which probably it was copied. For the pious among the patriarchs could not fail to perceive that the highest design alike, of the Sabbath and of the family economy, was, "that they should make (such truths) known to their children ; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments ;" that the knowledge of the laws and purposes of the Divine manifestation might be carried forward from age to age. In other words, the Divine Procedure in the past is never lost to the present or the future. J. H.

**14. In the second month, etc., was the earth dried.** The following table will exhibit a tolerably correct calendar of the time of the continuance of the flood and of Noah's abiding in the ark.

| A. | Æ. | N. | M. | D. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 600. | | 2. | 17. | | Noah enters the ark—fountains broken up. |
| " | | 3. | 27. | | Forty days' rain elapsed—ark borne up and floating. |
| " | | 7. | 17. | | One hundred and fifty days (including the 40) elapsed—ark rests. |
| " | | 10. | 1. | | Mountain-tops become visible. |
| " | | 11. | 11. | | Raven sent out. |
| " | " | | 18. | | Dove sent out—returned. |
| " | " | | 25. | | Dove again sent out—returned. |
| " | | 12. | 2. | | Dove again sent out—returned not. |
| " | " | | 28. | | Unaccounted for in the narrative. |
| 601. | | 1. | 1. | | Waters dried from off the surface—the body of the earth still saturated with moisture. |
| " | | 2. | 27. | | Ground fully dried ; Noah leaves the ark. |

The aggregate is one year and ten days. If, however, as Ainsworth supposes, the Jewish year consisted of only 354 days, six of the 12 months having each 30 days, and the remaining six but 29 = 354, then by adding 11 days for the 27th of the second month completed, the amount will be 365 days, or a full solar year. *Bush.*

**16.** The garden of Eden probably lay near the eastern foot of Mount Ararat ; and now, Noah and his sons went forth from the ark, to repeople the earth, near the very spot where Adam settled when he went out from Eden. This part of Western Asia is thus distinguished pre-eminently as the birthplace of the human family. And it was not with the seeds of physical life only that this region was charged ; intellectual life, and still more, spiritual life, had their sources, not in the same spot, but in the same district. A circle, with its centre at Haran, and a radius of 400 miles, will embrace Eden and Ararat ; Babylon and Nineveh, the early seats of learning and science ; Mesopotamia, where God revealed himself to Abraham ; Phœnicia, where commerce and many of the arts of peace arose ; Palestine, the birthplace of prophets, apostles, and evangelists innumerable.

and the scene of the birth, labors, and death of our blessed Lord; Tarsus, where Paul was born; and part of Asia Minor, where the labors of the apostles were chiefly carried on. W. G. B.

**20.** Even after the earth was quite dry, Noah awaited the express command of God before leaving the ark. His first act after that was to build "an altar unto Jehovah," and there to offer "burnt-offerings" "of every clean beast, and of every fowl." Nor was it merely in gratitude and homage to God, but also in spiritual worship that he thus commenced his life anew, and consecrated earth unto Jehovah. In bringing an animal sacrifice Noah followed the example of Abel; in calling upon the name of Jehovah he once again and solemnly adopted the profession of the Sethites. But there was this difference between his and any preceding sacrifice, that now for the first time we read of *building an altar*. A. E.

No sooner is Noah come out of the ark, but he builds an altar: not a house for himself, but an altar to the Lord: our faith will ever teach us to prefer God to ourselves. Delayed thankfulness is not worthy of acceptation. *Bp. H.* ——To look back upon the world, and reflect that in so short a space of time all his contemporaries were blotted from existence, while he and his little household were now the sole survivors of an extinguished race; to see the whole face of creation so entirely changed, and no trace of former scenes remaining; and then to think of what he owed to the preserving goodness of God, that had kept him safe in the midst of such an awful catastrophe;—all this could not but inspire him with overwhelming emotions of thankfulness, which he would naturally express. *Bush.*

*Every* fit animal is included in this sacrifice, as it is expressive of thanksgiving for a complete deliverance. We have also here the first mention of the burnt-offering; the whole victim, except the skin, being burned on the altar. M.

**21. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour.** This expression is used in condescension to human thought and language; and is intended to signify that God was pleased with the devout service of Noah, sacrificing to him from a pure heart, as men are wont to be pleased with sweet odors. A comparison taken from things human serves in some measure to illustrate things divine: and though it is not exact, yet it helps to convey a more lively and affecting idea of the thing than could be given without it. "A sweet-smelling savor" is Paul's phrase in the New Testament; where Christ is said to have "given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." *Waterland.* ——Noah's sacrifice was greatly accepted and highly accounted of by God. Such is God's condescending love to believers, that he looks more at their will than at their work; he minds more what they would do than what they do; he always prefers the willing mind before the worthiest work; and where desires and endeavors are sincere, there God judges such to be as good as they desire and endeavor to be. *Brooks.*

The charming simplicity of man's intercourse with God in the garden of Eden was here renewed through the second father of the race. Noah's first thought, on finding himself once more upon the solid ground, was to render to God gratitude and devotion for the preservation of himself and his family. And God, who ever delights in mercy, and welcomes the least sign of love and gratitude in man, accepted this offering as grateful to his own heart, and responded to it by a new covenant to preserve the earth in the orderly succession of its seasons, in the beauty and fruitfulness of its harvests. Observe how closely related are physical blessings to religious faith and obedience. He who loves and serves God receives not only gifts of grace, but the pledge of divine favor in all things; and the very earth in its teeming prosperity is a witness to the loving faithfulness of God to a righteous man. J. P. T.

Noah, Abraham and Isaac built altars wherever they were sojourning and offered bloody sacrifices thereon. We are shut up to this alternative: Either the whole system of altars and bloody sacrifices, as practised by Abel, Noah, Abraham and Isaac, was a thing of no significance, meaning nothing and good for nothing; or, God himself originated the system and enjoined it, and these good men were observing it in obedience to special revelation from God. The first side of this alternative is perfectly precluded by the fact that God approved their sacrifices. God "had respect to the offering of Abel." He "smelled a sweet savor" in the sacrifices offered by Noah. The other alternative therefore, viz. that bloody sacrifices originated in a direct revelation from God—is the only supposition left us. These sacrifices must have been practically valueless unless their expiatory significance was in some good degree understood. That God ordained them for the sake of their moral value, who can for a moment doubt? The conclusion, therefore, seems inevitable that God not only enjoined these bloody sacrifices, but gave his people to understand in general their significance to the extent

of fulfilling that unconscious prophecy of Abraham (Gen. 22 : 8) : "My son, God will provide for himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." These views, if just, are of vast historic value as showing *how much* God taught his people at that earliest day, pertaining to his great thoughts of redemption for a lost race. H. C.

The Bible is the history and development of Christianity, and nothing else. It is "the Gospel according to" Moses and David, Isaiah and Daniel, just as truly as it is the Gospel according to Matthew and Mark and Luke and John. And this is manifest from the unity of idea that underlies all "the divers manners" of the revelation. For of all the books in the world, the Bible is emphatically the "book of one idea." That idea is the grand enterprise of "the seed of the woman" in conflict with the Serpent and his seed, gathering his elect body, the Bride of the Lamb, out of all the successive ages. It is this Redeemer, Jehovah Jesus, who, assuming transiently the shadowy form of humanity, speaks with Adam and Noah, with Abraham and Jacob, with Moses and Joshua. In these cases, just as truly is it the record of Jesus Christ, as when it is the story of his walking on earth as "the Son of man" or of his communicating his will through the Holy Spirit to his Apostles after his ascension.

Not only is this Great Personage the subject of all the revelation alike, but the fundamental articles of its theology, even to the detailed forms of their expression, are one and the same from first to last. The wrath of God appeased, and sin pardoned by vicarious blood, is the theology of Adam, Abel, and Noah. Vicarious blood shed for sin, is the central thought of the theology of Abraham and Moses, of David and Isaiah, just as truly as in that of Peter and John and Paul, who declare "In him we have redemption through his blood;" and "His blood cleanseth from all sin." So the central idea of the worship which embodies this theology in ritual form. In the worship of Abel the sacrificial *lamb* was the peculiar feature. In the worship of Noah and Abraham, and of Moses four hundred years later, it is still the lamb whose blood is sprinkled, and which figures in the gorgeous ritual of the tabernacle. Seven hundred years later, in the visions of Isaiah it is still the "Lamb led to the slaughter." Again, seven hundred years, and John the Baptist, pointing to Jesus the antitype of all the preceding types, cries, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," and, at the close of the revelation, as John the Evangelist is permitted through "the door opened in heaven" to catch a glimpse of the glorious Church of the future, the worship has still the same central attraction—"the Lamb in the midst of the throne;" around whom are gathered the shouting myriads who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." S. R.

**22.** The gracious announcement that, while the earth remained, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night were not to cease, implies not only His purpose to spare our earth, but also that man might henceforth reckon upon a regular succession of seasons, and that he was to make this earth for the present his home, to till it, and to possess it. A. E.——It is an exceedingly profound and true thought that the normal succession of days and years, on which depend the existence of the earth and the welfare of man's life and therefore the regular course of nature, are no fixed course of things, but a voluntary gift of divine grace. The unbroken continuance of creation in beautiful harmony and the unbroken development of the history of humanity are the fruit of divine grace, which will not let God's glorious plan in reference to creation and humanity be frustrated by man's sin. And that gracious decree is linked to Noah's name, and was carried out in the sparing of Noah and in the unchecked growth of his posterity, though that posterity became in great part inwardly estranged from God. *Orelli.*

God's covenant of mercy in the unalterable fixtures of the seasons, is full of heavenly lessons in every part. *While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest shall not cease.* Seed-time and harvest are of all the Seasons the deepest, most direct, most profoundly thoughtful and suggestive in their instructions and their warnings. There is solemn meaning and warning in a seed; though it be out of sight, and dead beneath the ground, it speaketh. And every growth from seeds, the fruits, the trees, the harvests good or bad, all are laden with the lessons of character and consequences. Seed-time and harvest cannot come and go as seasons, and their laws cannot be familiarly known to us from year to year, without impressing on the mind a sense of opportunity and responsibility. The great lesson of a moral probation is borne upon the seasons of the year, is hidden in the very processes of nature, even as the seed itself is deposited in the earth, to germinate and be developed. These are stated ministries, knocking at the door of our hearts; forms of light and suggestion visiting every man that is born into the world. *Cheever.*

The course of nature is always changing. As it is with the times, so it is with the events of time, they are subject to vicissitudes, *day and night, summer and winter*, counterchanged. Yet nature is constant in this inconstancy; these seasons have never ceased, nor shall cease, while the sun continues such a steady measurer of time, and the moon such a *faithful witness in heaven*. This is *God's covenant of the day and of the night*, the stability of which is mentioned for the confirming of our faith in the covenant of grace, which is no less inviolable (Jer. 33 : 20). We see God's promises to the *creatures* made good, and thence may infer that his promises to all *believers* shall be so. H.——*This promise has been kept.* So long and faithfully kept, that even the *unbelieving and infidel world has come to believe it.* We look for the seasons in their course and duration as a matter of course. Why do we not believe God's *other* promises as readily and firmly? Have we not experience in matters spiritual as well as temporal? *Spurgeon.*

**9 : 1–7.** He repeated to Noah and his sons the blessing pronounced on Adam and Eve, that they should "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth," and that the inferior creatures should be subject to them. To this He added the use of animals for food. *Three new precepts* were given to Noah, in addition to the laws of the Sabbath and of marriage, which were revealed to Adam—namely, the abstinence from blood, the prohibition of murder, and the recognition of the civil authority. P. S.

**1.** "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,*" is a command given to those who had seen and experienced the wickedness of the old earth, with as much emphasis, with as large a benediction, as it was given on the day when the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. *Maurice.*

**2.** The old world was buried in the flood, that a new order of things might rise from its grave. For, manifestly, after the mixing up of the Sethite with the Cainite race, an entirely new commencement required to be made if the purpose of God in grace was to be carried to its goal. Hence, also, God once more pronounced upon Noah the blessing of fruitfulness which he had spoken to Adam, and gave him dominion over the lower creation. But in this new grant there was this essential difference—that man's dominion would now be one of force, and not, as formerly, of willing subjection. If God had at the first brought "every beast" and "every fowl" before Adam, as it were to do homage to him, and to receive from him their names, it was now said to Noah and to his descendants, "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth; into your hand are they delivered." A. E.

**3.** Two grants were made: one to Adam, and one to Noah. To Adam it was said, *Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree, bearing seed, to you it shall be for meat.* To Noah it is said, *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.* God's original grant of the use of his creatures for food was confined to the vegetable creation; now for the first time the use of animal food is authorized. *Magee.*

**3–6.** Here, the blood of even those animals whose flesh might be eaten by man is forbidden for food; because it is life itself, and therefore sacred to the Author of life. And the blood of man must not be shed by man, except where man is made God's minister of justice, because man is formed in the image of God, and only God has a right to take away, directly or by his minister, the life from one bearing God's likeness. *Trumbull.*

**4. Flesh with its life, its blood, shall ye not eat.** The animal must be slain before any part of it is used for food. One design of this restriction is to prevent the cruelty of mutilating or cooking an animal while yet alive and capable of suffering pain. The draining of the blood from the body is an obvious occasion of death, and therefore the prohibition to eat the flesh with the blood of life is a needful restraint from savage cruelty. M.——Though animal food was granted, yet the *blood* was most solemnly forbidden, because it was the life of the beast; and this *life* was to be offered to God as an atonement for sin. Hence the blood was ever held sacred, because it was the grand instrument of expiation; and because it was typical of that blood by which we enter into the holiest. A. C.——This law was prior to that of Moses, but it came from the same legislator. It was given to Noah, and consequently obligatory upon the whole world. Moses, however, insists upon it throughout his law. He positively prohibits it four times in one chapter of Deuteronomy, and thrice in one of the chapters of Leviticus. *Bruce.*——The reason for the prohibition of blood as food is primarily religious and evangelical and not merely natural. The great fundamental fact of this revelation is redemption by blood from first to last—the substitution of life for the forfeited life of the sinner. This was that which gave its significancy to all sacrifice. And therefore while sacrifice of bulls and goats continued

it behooved that reverence for the blood and the life which is in the blood should fill the souls of men. Nothing would tend so to degrade the notions of the fundamental idea of their religion as in their daily food to eat that blood which in the sacrifices of their worship represented to them their great reliance for salvation. Hence it was subsequently ordained for the Jews in connection with their ritual of sacrifice. The decision in Acts 20 requiring the Gentiles also to abstain from eating blood was chiefly, no doubt, to protect Jewish converts and prevent a seeming irreverence for the method in which they had been reared, of teaching salvation through "the life that is in the blood." S. R.

**5. At the hand of every beast will I require it.** That is, any beast that kills a man, shall itself be killed : not as if beasts were to blame if they killed a man ; but this was ordained with respect to men, for whose use beasts were created. God hereby instructed them, that murder was a most grievous crime, the punishment of which extended even to beasts. **At the hand of every man's brother.** And, therefore, "if at the hand of every *beast*, much more will I require it at the hand of every *man*:" whom He calls *brother*, to show that murder is the more heinous on this account, because we are all brethren. *Patrick.* ——God says in effect—Every human life is of great value ; every man must set great store by his own life ; and every man must consider himself in a high degree responsible for the life of his brother,—"Of every man's brother will I require the life of man." J. P.——Every man *is* his brother's keeper. Every man is shedding his own blood when he sheds his brother's blood. The word brother was addressed to a family ; Noah and his sons must have interpreted it by their own experience. But the words "*every man's brother*" expanded the principle of the family to a higher power. They declared that the *race* was a family ; they intimated that society was to be built up on the recognition of an actual relationship among the different members of it. *Maurice.*

**6. He that sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.** Such is the accountability to which God holds man for the blood of his fellow-man. The reason for this requirement is added : *For in the image of God made he man.* He that violates the sacredness of that image in his fellow-man, shall forfeit it in himself. Unquestionably, God here requires that the murderer shall be punished with death, and holds men guilty who disregard the requirement. If he intended by these words (as they are sometimes evasively interpreted) merely to predict that men would, unauthorized and criminally, put the murderer to death, then they are out of place in the connection with his own requirement in the preceding verse, and he follows them here with a reason for the act ("for in the image of God made he man") that has no force or pertinence. This was not a requirement of the Jewish law, to be abolished with it. It was made binding on all the races of men, descendants of Noah, and has never been revoked. T. J. C.

The passage should be construed in harmony with the scope of the context. Its close connection with the use of animals for the food of man and with the "requiring" of human blood shed by the violence of beasts compel us to find here precept and not prediction. Still more does the historic place of this precept, standing upon the ruins of the old world and in the presence of the yet unwasted bones of thousands whose wickedness had culminated in such recklessness of human life that "the earth was filled with violence." It was pertinent to lay a new and more effectual foundation for maintaining the peace of society and the sacredness of human life. The solemn lessons of the past required, not a prediction of retributive vengeance under the social law of self-preservation, but a divine precept demanding it and enforcing it with its logical reason—that "God made man in his own image." You may take the life of the lower animals for no higher cause than human sustenance—food for man's wants ; but let no man put forth his hand against the blood of man, for he bears the very "image of God." To make this new law the more solemnly impressive, man must himself be the executioner of this divine behest—"*By man shall his blood be shed.*" Society itself must commit to some of its members this solemn function and they must take the murderer's life. Nothing less can shield the life of man from bloody violence ; nothing less will duly honor God's image in man. . . . It was doubtless wise for God to begin as he did with Cain ; but when the race started anew after the flood, the Lord advanced to the true doctrine and enjoined on social man the solemn duty of shielding human life by taking the murderer's blood. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This was one step of manifest *progress* in the revelation of God's will as to the responsibility and duty of men in their social and governmental relations. It was progress in the origination of society—progress

built on the great lessons of human history H. C.

As Luther says, God has here instituted the temporal sword. This law is to be put into execution "by man," who in God's room inflicts God's punishment. Hence the divine right of the magistracy. However much the reason of man may speak and write against the punishment of death, here it stands as a divine enactment, and this is practically enforced through the whole Sacred Scriptures. C. G. B.——*By man shall his blood he shed.* Chal. "With witnesses by the sentence of the judges shall his blood be shed." The welfare of society requires that capital punishments should be inflicted, not by the stroke of private revenge, but by the arm of the authorized magistrate, and through the medium of a judicial sentence (Rom. 13 : 1). *Bush.*——Against murder the Lord thus provided by an early law, enacted and published before him out of whose loins the whole world after the flood was to be repeopled : to show that it was not meant for a national and temporary ordinance, but for an universal and perpetual law. *Bp. Sanderson.*——*For in the image of God made he man.* Murder is a great trespass upon God, as it destroys His likeness. And *self-murder* upon this account is forbidden, as well as the killing of others. *Bp. Kidder.*——*Death* is ordered to be punished by *death*, not because one is equivalent to the other, for that would be expiation and not punishment ; nor is death always an equivalent for death. But the reason upon which this sentence is grounded seems to be, that this is the highest penalty that man can inflict, and tends most to the security of mankind by removing one murderer from the earth and setting a dreadful example to deter others ; so that even this grand instance proceeds from other principles than those of retaliation. *Blackstone.*

The passage recounts the renewed covenant of God with spared and restored man—the terms of his new lease of the earth. He was sanctioned in killing and eating every living animal inferior to man—"every creeping thing that liveth." Here is the fallen creature, liable to passion, and open to temptation, now to be familiarized to the frequent use of the slaughtering knife ; and open, at the same time, to the consciousness that a similar act would as easily remove a rival or avenge an injury. The Author of the permission proceeds, therefore, at once, in close association with the permission to slay and eat flesh, to throw the protection of a further law round his frail and mortal creature, man. "And surely the blood of your lives will I require at the hand of *all that liveth.*" Then the law proceeds, "From the hand of man, from the hand of each his brother, or man his brother, will I require the life of man ;" *i.e.* the Lord has a controversy with every man that takes away the life of his fellow-man, and will follow out that controversy and make inquisition for blood. And then the Lord proceeds to show how he will deal with such men, what his law is in such a case, and what, as the result of that law, he authorizes to be done. "The shedder of the blood of man"—*i.e.* in the force of the Hebrew idiom, "when a man sheds the blood of man" (and evidently in the same deliberate and intentional way in which he has just been authorized to shed the blood of the beast ; for that, and not casualty or mortal accident, is the case in point)—"by man his blood shall be shed." Fair interpretation can make nothing of this but the authorizing the judicial punishment of death. The Lord knew that he was legislating for a race that would gather into society, that would take cognizance of crime. When he instituted a special society, he so interpreted his own law, and authorized the Israelites to slay the murderer ; and universal man, throughout all ages, has so understood it. The only plausible way of escaping from this meaning, is to assume that the sixth verse is not a law, but a prediction ; that at a solemn moment, when the communication was most unquestionably institutive and legislative, a sudden change should take place in its grammatical character and mood ; and that a prediction should be uttered of what should afterward occur as a matter of casualty. The objection to this is, first, its inconsistency with the tenor of the passage. The words *lo tocalu*, "thou shalt not eat of it," in the fourth verse, are, though in the future tense, evidently imperative. Why should we interpret the future tense in the sixth verse as only predictive? If the one is to be read as predictive, then the other should ; but it would be a false prediction that men should not eat the flesh with the blood in it ; for many do. The consistency, then, of the whole passage requires to translate both these verbs in the same imperative mood and tense. Again, if it is a prediction, it is a false and failing one ; and then, upon this very point of our postdiluvian lease stand the terms of a prophecy which God has not fulfilled. It is not true that, in the certain providence of God, every wilful shedder of blood has been brought to a condign and sanguinary death. *An.*

# Section 33.

## COVENANT WITH NOAH; HIS SIN, PROPHECY, DEATH.

GENESIS 9 : 8–29.

8 AND God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my
9 covenant with you, and with your seed after you ; and with every living creature that is
10 with you, the fowl, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you ; of all that go out of
11 the ark, even every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you ;
neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood ; neither shall there
12 any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant
which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual
13 generations : I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant
14 between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth,
15 that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant, which is
between me and you and every living creature of all flesh ; and the waters shall no more
16 become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud ; and I will look
upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living
17 creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of
the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.
18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth :
19 and Ham is the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah : and of these was
the whole earth overspread.
20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard : and he drank of the wine,
21 and was drunken ; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan,
22 saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth
23 took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the
nakedness of their father ; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's
24 nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto
25 him. And he said,

Cursed be Canaan ;
A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

26 And he said,

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem ;
And let Canaan be his servant.

27 God enlarge Japheth,
And let him dwell in the tents of Shem ;
And let Canaan be his servant.

28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah
29 were nine hundred and fifty years : and he died.

**8–17.** In addition to these promises and precepts, God made with Noah a COVENANT—that is, one of these *agreements* by which he condescended again and again to bind himself toward man ; not more sacred with him than a simple promise, but more satisfying to the weakness of our faith. Of these covenants, that made with Noah on behalf of his descendants may be called the *Covenant of God's forbearance*, under which man lives to the end of time. It repeated the promise that the world should not be again destroyed by a flood ; and it was ratified by the beautiful sign of the rainbow in the cloud, a *natural* phenomenon suited to the *natural laws* of whose permanence it was the token. It is important for us not to suffer our relations to Adam as our first father, or to Abraham as the father of the faithful, to overshadow our part in God's covenant with Noah as the ancestor of the existing human race. P. S.

Already we have studied two of these *Seven Testaments* or covenants. First, the Eden covenant with sinless man, guaranteeing the establishment in immortal bliss on condition of perfect obedience, which covenant failed at the fall. Second, the covenant of *grace* with the

guarantee of redemption, by the seed of the woman, of all who believe on the offered Redeemer, which again utterly failed, except in the case of a single family, and was prevented from becoming an utter and final failure only by the destruction of the whole corrupted race for the sake of saving the eight persons of the family. Having considered in previous chapters the elucidation and history of the outworking of these covenants, we come now to the third great covenant, which, after a like elucidation in a few chapters, is followed by the fourth great covenant, with Abraham as the representative man, organizing the church as a visible government separate from the world at large. Then, after a brief history of the outworking of that covenant in the patriarchy, comes the covenant mediated by Moses, which is the fifth great covenant, organizing a nation as a temporary shell to protect the church, with a special location assigned to it, along the highway of nations, where all the world must see and know it as a peculiar nation. Then, when at last the promise of that territory is completely fulfilled, and the nation sealed in it, comes the *sixth* great covenant with David organizing it as a typical kingdom. Then when the fulness of time is come and Messiah's work is finished, comes the *seventh* and last—the "New Testament"—in the blood of Christ actually shed, and the gospel of the one nation made the gospel of all nations. The Old Testament is thus actually the history and illustration of *six* Testaments (or covenants); this transaction with Noah being the third of the sixth in the history of redemption. S. R.

**8. God spake.** Let us not fail to notice those wonderful and beautiful ways of God with his children, coming down in such condescending and most familiar communion, talking with them apparently almost as man talks with his dearest friend; and this not in Paradise only before the fall, but after the fall scarcely less; and onward as the narrative indicates in the case of Enoch and of Noah. What more could he have done to reveal a *personal God* to mortals? H. C.

**13. I do set my bow in the cloud.** It was now that the rainbow was *appointed* by God to be a memorial both of his justice upon the old world, and of his mercy to the new. *Bp. Wilson.*——"Behold I *have set* my bow in the cloud"—*my* bow that I created when I gave both origin and law to nature. It was the very symbol of *constancy*, coming forth so beautifully, as it does, and so regularly after the storm. They wanted nothing startling. They had had evidence enough of the great power of God, whether regarded as miraculous, extraordinary, some awful change in nature, or directly supernatural; and now they needed the other assurance that the helm of nature had not been lost, but was still held by the same firm, constant hand that had ordained it in the beginning. The design now was to allay fear; the peace-speaking rainbow was to be an attestation of unfailing goodness—not of power or retribution. T. L.——How appropriate an emblem of the action of Divine grace always returning after wrath! Grace still sparing and preserving even when clouds of judgment have been threatening to desolate and destroy! And as the rainbow throws its radiant arch over the expanse between heaven and earth, and as with a wreath of beauty unites the two together again, after they have been engaged in an elemental war, it strikingly images to the thoughtful eye the essential harmony that is still to subsist between the higher and the lower spheres. Such undoubtedly is its symbolic import, as the sign peculiarly connected with the Noahic covenant; it holds out by means of its very form and nature an assurance of God's mercy, as engaged to keep perpetually in check the floods of deserved wrath, and continue to the world the manifestation of his grace and goodness. P. F.

**16. I will look upon it, that I may remember.** God did not "set this bow in the clouds" for His own sake, to engage His attention, and revive His memory whenever "He looked on it;" though that be the expression which the Holy Spirit, speaking after the manner of men, has thought fit to make use of: but for our sakes was it placed there, as an illustrious symbol of the Divine mercy and goodness, and to confirm our belief and confidence in God. And therefore, whenever we look upon the rainbow, we do well to "praise him that made it; very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof. It compasseth the heaven about with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it" (Ecclus. 43: 11, 12). *Stackhouse.*

We know that this covenant is in the nature of an oath, for in Isaiah he tells us, "I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth." There stands the rainbow preaching the fact that for the sake of redemption the world is spared. Hence it is that we find the seal of the covenant, as part of the symbols of redemption, figuring in the prophetic views of the glory of the incarnate God. When Ezekiel had his vision among the captives of the Chebar—that vision of the real worship of the

Universe, though the temple had been destroyed —he saw among the living creatures, and above the firmament over their heads, and there was a throne, and the appearance of a man upon it ; and around about the throne "as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the brightness round about." So when John in apocalyptic vision saw the door opened in heaven, beheld a "throne set in heaven and One sat on the throne ; and there was a *rainbow round about the throne.*" S. R.

Cultivate the spirit of moral interpretation if you would be wise and restful : then the rainbow will keep away the flood ; the fowls of the air will save you from anxiety ; and the lilies of the field will give you an assurance of tender care. And so with all things God has given us as signs and tokens : the sacred Book, the water of baptism, the bread and wine, the quiet Sabbath, the house of prayer ;—all these have deeper meanings than are written in their names ; search for those meanings, keep them, and you will be rich. J. P.

**18, 19.** The two verses form a connecting link between the preceding and the following passage. After the recital of the covenant, comes naturally the statement that by the three sons of Noah was the whole land overspread. This forms a fit conclusion to the previous paragraph. But the penman of these sentences had evidently the following paragraph in view. For he mentions that Ham was the father of Canaan ; which is plainly the preface to the following narrative. M.

The world began anew, in the person and family of the selected patriarch, whom alone "*the Lord had seen righteous in that generation.*" Now then for a better race,—if the human nature were intrinsically good, or corrigible by the most awful dispensations. But, all in vain ! The Flood could not cleanse the *nature* of man ; nor the awful memory and memorials of it repress the coming forth of selfishness, pride, ambition, anger, and revenge. J. F.

**20.** The manufacture of wine is the next recorded fact of progress. This again is far the oldest mention of a process, that of making and using fermented drinks, which is nearly if not absolutely universal. And inasmuch as Noah the husbandman "planted a vineyard," the extent and plan of the planting would render it probable that the practice was older than Noah. It is, however, not every region of the earth that offers the vine for that purpose. A great variety of fermented drinks have existed, such as at least seven kinds of beer, made from malt, maize, millet, milk, cava, rice, rye, and several kinds of wine, as they are called, made from the apple, pear, sugar-cane, from the agave in a large part of Asia, and from the palm far more extensively than from the vine, as in Chili, India, the Pacific Isles and all of Africa. But in Armenia none of these resorts were called for. Its fertile soil, abounding in other fruits, yields an abundant supply of grapes. S. C. B.

As far as we know, the old world was free from the curse of drunkenness. Noah's discovery (if it was such) was a dark harbinger of woe to the new world, of which he was to be the father. The consequences to which it led in his own case were but a type of the mischief which it was to work in the world at large. It was the lot of the successive fathers of mankind to bequeath to their children an element of misery. Between Adam's apple and Noah's vine, lamentation, and mourning, and woe have overspread the globe. W. G. B.

**21. Noah drank of the wine and was drunken.** The Holy Ghost, when he hath to do with sin, gives it its own name ; drunkenness must be drunkenness, murder must be murder. It is neither the goodness of the man, nor his being in favor with God, that will cause Him to lessen or mince his sin. Noah was drunken ; David killed Uriah ; Peter cursed and swore in the garden, and also dissembled at Antioch. This is not recorded to the intent that the name of these godly should rot, but to show that the best men are nothing without grace, and that "he that standeth should not be high-minded, but fear." They are also recorded for the support of the tempted, who, when they are fallen, are oft raised up by considering the infirmities of others. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." *Bunyan.*

One hour's drunkenness bewrays that which more than six hundred years' sobriety had modestly concealed ; he that gives himself to wine is not his own : what shall we think of this vice, which robs a man of himself, and lays a beast in his room ? Drunkenness doth both make imperfections, and show those we have to others' eyes ; so would God have it that we might be doubly ashamed, both of those weaknesses which we discover and of that weakness which moved us to discover. *Bp. H.*

**21.** It is a strong argument of the veracity of Moses, that throughout his history he has drawn no character so fair, as not to leave some blemishes still abiding on it. And it is an act of singular kindness and benefit to us that God has ordered the faults and miscarriages of His

saints so constantly to be recorded in Scripture ; since "they are written for our admonition," to remind us of our frailty and to alarm our caution and fear. The example of Noah, who had escaped the pollutions of the *old* world, and was now overcome in a time of security and peace, calls perpetually upon "him that thinketh he standeth, to take heed lest he fall." *Stackhouse.*——God has left this miscarriage upon record to teach us, 1. That the fairest copy that ever mere man wrote since the fall had its blots and false strokes. It was said of Noah that he was *perfect in his generations*, but this shows that it is meant of sincerity, not a sinless perfection. 2. That sometimes those who, with watchfulness and resolution, have by the grace of God kept their integrity in the midst of temptation, have, through security and carelessness and neglect of the grace of God, been surprised into sin, when the hour of temptation has been over. Noah, who had kept sober in drunken company, is now drunken in sober company. The consequence of Noah's sin was *shame*. He was made naked to his shame, as Adam when he had eaten forbidden fruit. Yet Adam sought concealment ; Noah is so destitute of thought and reason that he seeks no covering. This was a fruit of the vine that Noah did not think of. Observe here the great evil of the sin of drunkenness. It *discovers* men ; what infirmities they have they betray when they are drunken, and what secrets they are intrusted with are then easily got out of them. Drunken porters keep open gates. It *disgraces* men, and exposes them to contempt. As it shows them, so it shames them. Men say and do that when drunken, which, when they are sober, they would blush at the thoughts of. H.

Noah may have been but little used to strong drink, and hence may not have known that it would so soon overcome him ; yet we may well follow the wisdom of Calvin, and say, "Leaving all this in uncertainty, let us learn from Noah's intemperance how foul and detestable a vice drunkenness is" The Holy Scriptures never conceal the sins even of God's greatest saints, and the sins of saints are sure to meet with chastisement. Noah's piety is plainly recorded. It is also plainly recorded that he fell into sin, whether partly of ignorance or wholly of infirmity ; that sin brought with it shame, and, as is so often found, was the occasion of sin to others, and led on to consequences disastrous to the descendants of all those who in any degree shared in the guilt of it. Noah sinned, Ham sinned, perhaps, too, Canaan sinned. So there was a heritage of sorrow to the descendants of Noah in the line of Ham, to the descendants of Ham in the line of Canaan. E. H. B.

**22.** Ham would not have mocked his father, when overcome with wine, if he had not long before cast from his soul that reverence which, according to God's command, children should cherish toward their parents. *Luther.*——What he did was only an index to his character ; open acts give *occasion* for punishment, but the punishment is earned by, and is administered for, the depravity out of which open acts spring. **Told his two brethren.** Clearly not that they might do what they did, nor in any such spirit ; but jestingly and undutifully. *Alf.*

**24. Youngest son.** Many writers of great authority, both Jewish and Christian, understand by the term here used, "his younger (little) son," not his son Ham, but his grandson Canaan. This would correspond with the tradition mentioned by Origen that the sin of Ham was shared by Canaan, or it may have been that the chief sin lay with Canaan, and hence that he especially inherited the curse. Many have adopted this opinion, and it would certainly solve most of the difficulty. E. H. B.

**25–27.** The manner of Scripture here is worthy of particular remark. First, the prediction takes its rise from a characteristic incident. The conduct of the brothers was of comparatively slight importance in itself, but in the disposition which it betrayed it was highly significant. Secondly, the prediction refers in terms to the near future and to the outward condition of the parties concerned. Thirdly, it foreshadows under these familiar phrases the distant future, and the inward, as well as the outward, state of the family of man. Fourthly, it lays out the destiny of the whole race from its very starting-point. These simple laws will be found to characterize the main body of the predictions of Scripture. Further, Scripture sees the race in the father, traces up its unity to him, discerns in him the leading traits of character that often mark his remotest posterity, and identifies with him in destiny all those of his race who continue to take after him. Thus Adam denotes the whole race, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, its three great branches. Attention to this law of the unity, continuity, and identity of a race, will aid us much in understanding the dealings of Providence with the several branches of the human family. M.

These words of Noah are of the greatest importance for the conception of the general history of mankind given in the Old Testament : "Cursed be Canaan ; let him be a servant of servants to his brothers." "Praised be Jehovah

the God of Shem ; and let Canaan be his servant." "May Elohim give enlargement to Japheth, and let him (Japheth) dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be their servant." According to our translation, the passage declares that God is to Shem the God of revelation, while he is for Japheth's descendants only the transcendent Divinity, but at the same time it points to a participation by Japheth in the blessing assigned to Shem : Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem, gaining domestic rights there, which in history has been spiritually fulfilled in the most glorious manner. . . . The race of Shem, to whom Jehovah is God, is chosen as the bearer of divine revelation ; on Japheth the blessing is conferred through Shem ; on Ham, and mainly on Canaan, the curse of slavery is to press. On the other side, the establishment of that *world kingdom* which is at enmity with God, proceeds from the Hamites (10 : 8 ff.), whose first seat appears to have been Babel. *Here begins the distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world which runs through the whole Bible.* The unity of the race of man is broken up into peoples and tongues ; but while in the view of the heathen the diversity of peoples and castes is original, and universal brotherhood is to them a chimera and to a degree an abomination, Mosaism, in its *list of the nations*, preserves the consciousness of the *blood-relationship of all nations*, which are again to be united in time to come by one blessing of God. O.

A threefold development of humanity is foreseen in this oracle. One portion of it (Shem) will be received into a specially intimate relation to God, who reveals himself to it as Yahveh. It will be the depository of the history of revelation and redemption. Another (Japheth) will extend prosperously in the world and acquire lasting renown, by the favor of the God who makes everything go well with all who fear and honor him by right conduct. It will be the depository of culture, and the heroic race of history. A third for its ungodliness will bear the curse of history, subjected and enslaved by its brethren, laden with the world's ban. It is not meant that all Shemitic nations will be united with Yahveh and all Hamitic nations laden with the curse, still less that all individuals among these nations will assume their ancestors' attitude to God. But regarding history as a whole, we see that certain characteristics are hereditary in families of nations. On these leading types, which will be more or less reproduced in their posterity, blessing and curse are here pronounced. *Orelli.*

**25. Cursed be Canaan.** The ancient prophecies must be understood, not of single persons, but of whole nations. The *curse* of servitude pronounced upon Canaan, and the promise of *blessing* and *enlargement* made to Shem and Japheth, extend to their whole race ; as afterward the prophecies concerning Ishmael, and those concerning Esau and Jacob, and those relating to the twelve Patriarchs. The curse, therefore, upon Canaan was properly a curse upon the Canaanites. God, foreseeing the wickedness of this people, which began in their father Ham, and greatly increased in this branch of his family, commissioned Noah to pronounce a curse upon them, and to devote them to the servitude and misery, which their vices and iniquities would deserve. *Bp. Newton.* ——They suffered both for their own sin and that of the founder of their race. The long-suffering of God did not hasten their perdition. He allowed them to grow and prosper during the ten generations from Noah to Abraham, and the five following centuries from Abraham to Joshua ; their fields and vineyards yielded abundant harvests, and their land was full of strong and populous cities ; but their evil deeds accumulated, and they forfeited the land which their vices had contaminated. *Kalisch.*

**Servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.** The word *brethren*, in Hebrew, comprehends more distant relations. The descendants, therefore, of Canaan were to be subject to the descendants of both Shem and Japheth : and the natural consequence of vice in communities as well as in single persons is slavery. Several centuries, 800 *years*, after the delivery of this prophecy, the Israelites, who were descendants of Shem, under the command of Joshua, invaded the Canaanites, smote above thirty of their kings, took possession of their land, slew several of the inhabitants, made the Gibeonites and others servants and tributaries ; and Solomon afterward subdued the rest. The Greeks and Romans too, who were descendants of Japheth not only subdued Syria and Palestine, but also pursued and conquered such of the Canaanites as were anywhere remaining ; as the Tyrians and Carthaginians, the former of whom were ruined by Alexander and the Grecians, and the latter by Scipio and the Romans. And ever since the miserable remainder of this people have been slaves to a foreign yoke ; first to the Saracens, who descended from Shem ; and afterward to the Turks, who descended from Japheth ; and they groan under their dominion at this day. *Bp. Newton.*

At present, every vestige of the race of Canaan,

and even their name, has disappeared from the earth. Generally, however, Ham's posterity are to this day subjected to political servitude and the bondage of heathenism ; and shall so remain until for them also the word shall be fulfilled (Ps. 78 : 31), "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God,"—a prophecy for whose accomplishment the way is now being paved. C. G. B.

**26.** Instead of blessing Shem, the aged father blesses Jehovah, the God of Shem, whom he sees in intimate union with Shem. The oracle of blessing is thus turned into praise of Him who is the source of blessing. Shem's highest happiness is that he has this God for his God. Here for the first time we find the genetival combination common afterward : *God of a man, a nation.* When humanity parts into different branches, the universal Deity also is specialized. To one portion of humanity the true living God stands in a relation of mutual possession. *Orelli.*——Noah could only give utterance to his grateful emotions : Blessed be Jehovah, the God of the covenant with his professed people, the God of all blessings, of ever-enduring love and faithfulness ! What will he not do for his chosen people, brought into relations to himself so near and so dear ! In this line the sweep of his prophetic eye took in the Hebrew race--Abraham and the patriarchs ; Moses and the pious kings and holy prophets ; and above all, the Great Messiah—to be born of David's line and to be the incarnation of God's mercy to a lost world. No wonder his soul was moved to devoutest adoration—Blessed be Jehovah who reveals himself as the God of Shem ! H. C.——Jehovah was the God of Shem--*that* in the word of Noah was declared to be his peculiar distinction. In like manner, Jehovah from the first made himself known to Abraham as his God ; nay, even took the name of "God of Abraham" as a distinctive epithet, and made the promise, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee," a leading article in the covenant established with him. And as the peculiar blessing of Shem was to be held with no exclusive design, but that the sons of Japheth far and wide might share in it, so Abraham is called not only to be himself blessed, but also that he might be a blessing,—a blessing to such an extent, that those should be blessed who blessed him, and in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. P. F.

**27. God shall enlarge Japheth.** In the Hebrew there is a plain allusion to Japheth's name, which signifies enlargement ; as there is to many others in Scripture. Japheth was *enlarged* both in territory and in children. As to territory, his posterity possessed, besides all Europe, the lesser Asia, Media, part of Armenia, Iberia, Albania, and those vast regions to the north which anciently the Scythians inhabited, and now the Tartars ; and it is not improbable that the new world was peopled by some of his northern descendants going thither by the straits of Anian. As to progeny, from the next chapter it appears that Japheth had seven sons, whereas Ham had only four, and Shem only five : and the northern hive was always remarkable for its fecundity, continually sending out colonies southward both in Europe and in Asia, both in former and in latter times.

*He shall dwell in the tents of Shem.* By this may be meant either that *God* or that *Japheth* shall dwell in the tents of Shem. In either sense it has been fulfilled. In the former sense literally, when the *Shechinah* or Divine Presence rested on the ark and dwelt in the tabernacle and temple of the Jews ; and when "the Word, who was with God and was God," pitched his tent and "dwelt among us." In the latter sense it was fulfilled, first, when the Greeks and Romans, who sprung originally from Japheth, subdued and possessed Judea and other countries of Asia belonging to Shem ; and again, spiritually, when they were proselyted to the true religion ; and they who were not Israelites by birth became Israelites by faith, and lived, as we and many others of Japheth's posterity live at this day, within the pale of the Church of Christ. *Bp. Newton.*

Wide room (an allusion to his name) may God make for Japheth ! For wide room is to his race the condition of prosperous development, and also its consequence. As matter of fact, Japheth has spread, not merely over an important part of Asia, but over the distant broad island-continent of Europe. And to this geographical extension correspond his conquests in the intellectual field. In all branches of culture he has borne off the palm. Japheth is to have the lion's share, not only of the possession of the world but of the glory of history. *Orelli.*——As a German writer expresses it : "What are we all but descendants of Japheth, who dwell in the tents of Shem ; and what is the language of the New Testament, but that of Javan spoken in the dwellings of Shem ?" A. E.

**28, 29.** Noah lived 950 years ; 20 more than Adam, and but 19 less than Methuselah ; this long life was a further reward of his signal piety, and a great blessing to the world, to which, no doubt, he continued a *preacher of righteousness*, with this advantage, that now all

he preached to were his own children. God put a period to his life at last ; though he lived long, yet he died, having, probably, first seen many that descended from him, dead before him. Noah lived to see two worlds, but being an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, when he died he went to see a better than either. H.——Noah lived for 350 years after the Flood, and died at the age of 950, just halfway, according to the common chronology, between the Creation and the Christian era. He survived the fifth and eighth of his descendants, *Pe'eg* and *Reu ;* he was for 128 years contemporary with *Terah*, the father of *Abraham ;* and died only two years before the birth of Abraham himself. Looking backward, we find that he was born only 126 years after the death of *Adam*, and fourteen years after that of *Seth.* He was contemporary with *Enos* for 84 years, and with the remaining six antediluvian patriarchs (except Enoch) for centuries. These computations show by how few steps, and yet by how many contemporary teachers, the traditions of primeval history may have been handed down – from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, and, we might add, from Abraham to Moses. P. S.

The history of Noah is now closed, in the customary form of the fifth chapter. This marks a connection between the third and fourth documents, and points to one hand as the composer, or at least compiler, of both. The document now closed could not have had the last paragraph appended to it till after the death of Noah. But, with the exception of these two verses, it might have been composed hundreds of years before. This strongly favors the notion of a constant continuator, or, at all events, continuation of the sacred history. Every new prophet and inspired writer whom God raised up added the necessary portion and made the necessary insertions in the sacred record. And hence the Word of God had a progressive growth and adaptation to the successive ages of the church. The present document stands between the old world and the new. Hence it has a double character, being the close of the antediluvian history, and the introduction to that of the postdiluvian race. It records a great event, pregnant with warning to all future generations of men. And it notes the delegation, by God to man, of authority to punish the murderer by death, and therefore to enforce all the minor sanctions of law for breaches of the civil compact. It therefore points out the institution of civil government as coming from God, and clearly exhibits the accountability of all governments to God for all the powers they hold, and for the mode in which they are exercised. This also is a great historical lesson for all ages. M.

## Section 34.

### "NATIONS DIVIDED IN THE EARTH."

GENESIS 10 : 1–32.

1 Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth : and unto them
were sons born after the flood.
2 The sons of Japheth ; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech,
3 and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer ; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. And the sons
4 of Javan ; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. Of these were the isles of the
5 nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue ; after their families, in their
nations.
6 And the sons of Ham ; Cush, and Mizraim, and Put, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush ;
7 Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabteca : and the sons of Raamah ; Sheba,
8 and Dedan. And Cush begat Nimrod : he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a
9 mighty hunter before the LORD : wherefore it is said, Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the
10 LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in
11 the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and
12 Rehoboth-Ir, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (the same is the great city).

13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, and Pathrusim, and
14 Casluhim (whence went forth the Philistines), and Caphtorim.
15 And Canaan begat Zidon his firstborn, and Heth ; and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and
16 the Girgashite ; and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite ; and the Arvadite, and the
17 Zemarite, and the Hamathite : and afterward were the families of the Canaanite spread
18 abroad. And the border of the Canaanite was from Zidon, as thou goest toward Gerar, unto
19 Gaza ; as thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, unto Lasha.
20 These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, in their nations.
21 And unto Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, to him
22 also were children born. The sons of Shem ; Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud,
23 and Aram. And the sons of Aram ; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash. And Arpachshad
24 begat Shelah ; and Shelah begat Eber. And unto Eber were born two sons : the name of the
25 one was Peleg ; for in his days was the earth divided : and his brother's name was Joktan.
26 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah ; and Hadoram, and
27 Uzal, and Diklah ; and Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba ; and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab :
28 all these were the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest toward
29 Sephar, the mountain of the east. 30 These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after
31 their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.
32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations : and of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

The tenth chapter of Genesis has furnished the basis of a vast amount of investigation and called forth a singular amount of admiration, being, in Bunsen's language, "the most learned of all ancient documents, and the most ancient among the learned;" or, as Johannes Von Müller puts it, "history has its beginning in this table." S. C. B.

The tenth chapter of Genesis is the most remarkable historical document in existence ; remarkable, because associated with facts in the past which have been established, and with facts in the future which could only be known to one supernaturally instructed. No page of history can be made parallel with it. The records of succeeding centuries confirm it, and the present condition of the world is its commentary. *W. Fraser.*——The evident purpose of this chapter is to present in an ethnographic chart the illustration of the outworking of God's providence in the fulfilment of the prophecy to Noah. And it furnishes another strong proof in confirmation of the superhuman character of this history, that it thus so boldly ventures upon such a detail of facts, which historical science may put rigidly to the test. Bishop Butler well remarks in the analogy (pt. 2, chap 7) how the historic character of these sacred records, and especially the great length of time which they cover, and the great extent and variety of subjects whereof they treat, gives the largest scope for criticism, and if the narrative be not true this should render the task of confuting it very easy. Can any man believe that if such a history, dealing with the affairs of all the greatest nations of antiquity, were a fictitious narrative-modern historical science, with its searching methods and its exact and extended knowledge, would not long since have completely overthrown the historical authority of the sacred volume? But what is remarkable of modern historical inquiry is that as it has found histories and monuments long buried and unlocked the stores to increase in extent and exactness the knowledge of primeval times—instead of contradiction, all harmonizes with and confirms this chart as valid historical statement. We have seen how the narrative of Eden and the fall of man, and also the subsequent destruction of the flood, have been attested by all the traditions of the nations and ages. Now we approach the era when scientific history may delve out from the ruins of the ancient ages at least sufficient facts to test the only historic narrative in existence of the first thousand years after the flood. This book volunteers a general statement of the repeopling of the earth. The first feature of the statement is that it enumerates the nations under three heads—the sons of Japheth, the sons of Ham and the sons of Shem. Now the most advanced modern ethnological science having set itself by a careful analysis of facts to establish a classification of races, has formed a precisely similar triple division of mankind into the Semitic. the Aryan and the Turanian, or "Allophylian." And when we proceed to examine the groups into which this 10th of Genesis has thrown the races, we find a most remarkable agreement with the conclusions to which ethnological science has come from a

consideration, independent of the Bible history, of the facts of human language and physical type. Prichard and Bunsen and Max Müller, Rawlinson and Wilkinson but indorse the older learning and diligence, in another line of inquiry, as pursued in the methods of Bales, of Faber, of Buchart, of Leclerc, of Sir William Jones, who before them had labored so successfully in these inquiries, and the results of whose conclusions corroborated this general statement in Genesis 10th. S. R.

Whether Chaldean or Phœnician, Egyptian or Arabian, Greek or Roman, Mongol or Tartar, Indo-Germanic, Celtic, Belgic or Briton—all find the germ of their nationality in this wonderful chapter, and all concur to swell and substantiate the proof that the human race sprang from Noah and that we have no occasion to look for pre-Adamic men or for tribes that escaped the flood and have no pedigree among the sons of Noah. All the light that comes up from the comparative study of the languages of the race helps us still to follow the track of the emigrating tribes as they diverged from the ancient home of Noah's family. The Science of Ethnography begins with this chapter of inspiration. H. C.

The Scriptural ethnography which divides the human family into three great families, the Semitic, Japhetan, and Hamite, is confirmed from so many sources, from tradition, from monuments, from names of tribes and places, from affinities of language, from profane history, that its correctness, apart from all reference to the divine authority of the Bible, cannot be reasonably questioned. *B. & F. Ev. Rev.* ——What could be more fitting than to recognize in this narrative the account of the division of Central Asiatic mankind into those three great world-historical races, which form in themselves a unity, and to which we are now in a position to trace back all the peoples of Asia and Europe known to us by their speech? Research respecting these three races, the Turanians, the Semites, and the Aryans, leads us to a great common centre—the district bounded by the mountains of Central Asia—the Caucasus, Ararat and the Altai. *Bunsen.*

According to the Scriptures, the terrestrial Paradise, the birthplace of the human race, was located on the high table-lands of Central Asia, affording an outflow to the four great rivers named in Genesis. From this centre, the fountain of populations, the nations of the Old World whose history is recorded in the Bible, flowed down toward the south along the channels of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and westward toward Palestine, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Europe. In this way the unity of the race is maintained, all the modern peoples being derived from a common centre, and connected by intimate ties of blood and language plainly legible after so many ages of separation from the original root. *D. Sherman.*

The *fifth* document (chaps. 10 : —11 : 9) relates to the generations of the sons of Noah. It presents first a genealogy of the nations, and then an account of the distribution of mankind into nations, and their dispersion over the earth This is the last section which treats historically of the whole human race. Only in incidental, didactic, or prophetic passages do we again meet with mankind as a whole in the Old Testament. The present chapter signalizes a new step in the development of the human race. They pass from the one family to the seventy nations. This great process covers the space of time from Noah to Abraham. During this period the race was rapidly increasing under the covenant made with Noah. M.

**1.** The ethnological table, to which the first verse forms, as it were, the general title, is immediately connected with the genealogical table of chap. v. It gives us the only true and certain basis for the history of the most ancient nations, and of the gradual spread of the posterity of Noah in segregated races over the countries of the globe. The stronger the light which, in these modern days, has been cast upon the study of countries, nations, and languages, the more have the notices in this and the following chapters been confirmed, as historically and geographically true. C. G. B.

This genealogical table shows us the connection and the severance of the nations of the old world, according to their position toward the history of the kingdom of God. Those nations which had most influence on it in its course are minutely reckoned up ; others, which had but a remote connection therewith, are scarcely touched on. *Gerl.* ——No ethnology in his period, no history, no philology, could have taught that to Moses ; but now the historian, helped by all the monuments of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and Palestine, and the philologist and the ethnologist all agree, after their marvellous researches in this century, that the tenth chapter of Genesis exactly describes the distribution of the race. Where did Moses get these chapters from? He did not get them from science. He got them from God! *Crosby.*

**Sons of Noah.** The descent of all mankind from Noah is, of course, a renewed testimony by Scripture to the unity of the human

race—a doctrine so intimately connected with the Divine plan of Redemption, and so vital to the brotherhood and mutual sympathy of man with man. *Geikie.*

The earth was again peopled by the descendants of the three sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Shem is the Assyrian Samu, "olive colored," Ham is Khammu, "burned black," and Japheth Ippat, "the white race." The tribes and races which drew their origin from them are here enumerated. The arrangement of this chapter, however, is geographical, not ethnological; the peoples named in it being grouped together according to their geographical position, not according to their relationship in blood or language. Hence it is that the non-Semitic Elamites are classed along with the Semitic Assyrians, and that the Phœnicians of Canaan, who spoke the same language as the Hebrews, and originally came from the same ancestors, are associated with the Egyptians. When this fact is recognized, there is no difficulty in showing that the statements of the chapter are fully consistent with the conclusions of modern research. *Sayce.*

1. The territories of JAPHETH lie chiefly on the coasts of the Mediterranean, in Europe and Asia Minor, "the isles of the Gentiles;" but they also reach across Armenia and along the north-eastern edge of the Tigris and Euphrates valley, over Media and Persia. The race spread westward and northward over Europe, and at the other end as far as India, embracing the great Indo-European family of languages. This wide diffusion was prophetically indicated by the very name, Japheth (*enlarged*), and by the blessing of his father Noah. In Greek mythology the Titian JAPETUS is the progenitor of the human race, and Milton has not scrupled to call his son Prometheus "Japheth's wiser son."

2. The race of SHEM occupied the south-western corner of Asia, including the peninsula of Arabia. Of his five sons, *Arphaxad* is the progenitor both of the Hebrews and of the Arabs and other kindred tribes, whose origin is recorded in the Book of Genesis. North of them were the children of *Aram* (which signifies *high*), in the highlands of Syria and Mesopotamia. *Asshur* evidently represents Assyria; and the eastern and western extremities were occupied by the well-known nations of the Elymæans (children of *Elam*) on the south-eastern margin of the valley of the Tigris, and the Lydians (children of *Lud*) in Asia Minor.

3. The race of HAM (the *swarthy*, according to the most probable etymology) presents very difficult but interesting problems. Their chief seat was in Africa, but they are also found mingled with the Semitic races on the shores of Arabia, and on the Tigris and Euphrates, while on the north they extended into Palestine (the land of the *Philistines*), Asia Minor, and the larger islands, as Crete and Cyprus. In Africa, *Mizraim* is most certainly identified with Egypt; *Cush* with Ethiopia, above Egypt; and *Phut* probably with the inland peoples to the west. Among the sons of Mizraim, the *Lubim* correspond to Libya; and those of Cush represent tribes which crossed the Red Sea and spread along the southern and eastern shores of Arabia, up the Persian Gulf and the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. P. S.

The intimations given in the earlier chapters of Genesis on all matters of purely secular interest, are incidental only, and exceedingly obscure. And yet enough is said to indicate how much there lay beyond and outside of the narrative which is given. The dividing of the tribes of the Gentiles among the descendants of Japheth, conveys the idea of movements and operations which probably occupied long intervals of time, and many generations of men. The genealogy of Shem neither does, nor professes to do, more than to trace the order of succession among a few families only out of the millions then already existing in the world. *Argyll.*

We have in our museums, inscribed on cylinders and tablets of clay, the literature of the nations who of old inhabited these ancient lands. We also possess translations of writings in the language of Accad (G. 10 :10), made when that town was passing out of memory for the libraries of Assyrian kings, and which, even in this form, are themselves anterior to the Christian era by six or seven centuries. These writings are childishly polytheistic and full of fable, but it is remarkable that they cover much the same ground as the earlier narratives of Genesis. R. P. S.——Traditions, legends, and historic annals have been exhumed illustrating, in a most remarkable manner, not merely those portions of Scripture in which the wars of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings are chronicled, but, strange to say, the very earliest narratives in the book of Genesis. Inscribed tablets, which have lain buried for two thousand five hundred years beneath desolate mounds on the plains of Assyria and Babylonia, contain, in a language until very recently unknown to scholars, accounts in some points substantially identical with the Mosaic narrative of the creation, the fall, and the deluge. The Bible represents those great plains as the home of our first par-

ents, the site of Eden, the scene of the deluge and of the confusion of tongues, the birthplace of Israel, the centre from which the human race was dispersed, and the common nucleus of those mighty empires which for ages ruled the destinies of the world—Chaldea, Babylonia, Assyria, Media, and Persia. The Record chambers of Nineveh, recently discovered, have supplied documents which confirm the Biblical annals. J. L. P.——The historical records and public documents of the Assyrians were kept on tablets and cylinders of baked clay. To the height of a foot or more from the floor these chambers were entirely filled with them ; some entire, but the greater part broken The largest tablets were flat and measured about 9 inches by 6½ ; the smaller were slightly convex. *Layard.*

Men have been enabled not only to find out the meaning of the remarkable cuneiform character, but also to bring out from its grave a language—nay, two, three languages—that were altogether dead, of which not one single word or syllable was known to us before ; and now those languages have their grammars and their dictionaries and their reading-books, and we can study them in our homes as we can study Hebrew or Greek. There is the *Assyrian* language especially, of which there is now found an immense literature, the literature especially of the kings of Assyria, a language which is the old parent of the Hebrew—the Sanscrit, so to speak, of the Semitic dialects ; and there is the *Akkad* language, as it is called, or one of the Turanian stock, belonging to Southern Babylonia ; and then, also, there is the *Median* language ; and these three languages, that thirty years ago were not known to exist, have now their full development in grammar and dictionary. In these remarkable remains have been found the tablets written with the cuneiform character by kings some of whom reigned 2000 years before Christ, in the time of Abraham and before him ; and in some of these tablets we have long and particular records of all the events of their reigns ; and it is interesting for us, in examining these records, to find at times the mention of Palestine and the kings with whose names we are so familiar in Holy Writ. *Crosby.*

This history is, moreover, corroborated by contemporary writers of other nations, as far as they touch upon the same times and places. It has been, and is still, receiving striking and frequent confirmation of its statements from the undoubted monuments of the past, from the stamps on the bricks of Babylon, the arrow-heads on the tablets of Nineveh, the hieratic writings on the papyri of Egypt, and the inscriptions on the stones of Persia, Media and Palestine. It is more remarkable still that the sacred history of the Bible is the most trustworthy source to which antiquarians can resort for substantial aid in the decipherment of inscriptions and the identification of places coming within the range of its records. Hence, it appears that this history is not only true in itself, but at the same time detects and corrects history in other documents bearing upon the same events. M.

If we trace back the thread of human history, we have modern Europe, the Middle Ages, the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, Rome. We can follow the Roman history to seven hundred and fifty years before Christ. Before the Romans were the Greeks. We can trace them back through Demosthenes, Thucydides, Herodotus, Homer. Solon was about 600 B.C. ; Lycurgus about 900 B.C. Back of that we place the Trojan war, about 1200 B.C., the Lycians, the Lydians, the Carians, etc.; and there, excluding certain confused ideas of Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Etruscan, and Phœnician history, one thread was lost, excepting the earlier Hebrew chronicles, written about 1500 B C. But modern research has laid bare the Egyptian and Mesopotamian annals, and we know now more of the daily life of the Memphian and Theban monarchies than we do of the Romans before the Punic wars. The long-sealed records of ancient Babylonia, India, Phœnicia, Palestine, Persia and Moab have also been more or less illustrated by archæological inquiry. *Southall.*

To take THE NAMES OCCURRING IN THE TABLE OF NATIONS as applying merely to single individuals or to founders of tribes, is to misunderstand the eastern mode both of viewing and of writing history. They chiefly refer to groups of nations, the later name of a nation being transferred to its ancestor, as according to oriental ideas a tribe and its founder are in reality one. Besides in many cases the same name applies both to the land and its inhabitants. Thus the names Canaan, Aram, etc., were in the first place transferred from the country to the nation and then from the latter to its founder, who represented the nation in its totality and unity. When the personal name of the founder of a tribe was not preserved by the remembrance of events connected with him, it gradually sank into oblivion, and the name of the nation took the place of that of its founder. K.

There is a most remarkable agreement between the actual arrangement here made and the conclusions to which the theoretic reasoning of modern ethnologists have come, from the

facts of human language and of physical type. Thus this chapter has classified together of the sons of Japheth—the Cymry or Celts (Gomer), the Medes (Madai), and the Ionians or Greeks (Javan); and thus has actually anticipated what is known in modern times as the "Indo-European theory" of the essential unity of the Aryan (Asiatic) races with the principal races of Europe—the Celts and the Ionians. So in this chapter are thrown together as the "children of Shem" the Assyrians (Asshur), the Syrians (Aram), the Hebrews (Eber), and the Joktanian Arabs (Joktan), the four principal races which modern ethnology recognizes under the heading of the "Semitic" races. So again under "the children of Ham" this tenth chapter arranges Cush, the Ethiopians, Mizraim, the Egyptians, Sheba and Dedan, the Southern Arabians, and Nimrod, an ancient people of Babylon. And, accordingly, between these four races the latest linguistic researches have established the closest affinity. Indeed, the whole tendency of modern ethnological inquiry has been to put almost beyond question the accuracy of this "Book of the Generations of Noah," and to create a feeling among the true scientific ethnologists, well expressed by Sir Henry Rawlinson in saying, "It is the most authentic record we possess for the affiliation of nations." And, as even the rationalistic Kalisch, the recent German commentator, says, "It is an unparalleled list, the combined result of reflection and deep research, and no less valuable as a historical document than as a lasting proof of the brilliant capacity of the Hebrew mind." Any one who will carefully study the essay of Sir Henry Rawlinson "On the ethnic affinities of the nations of Western Asia" (Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. 1st, appendix essay 11th) will find this whole subject treated in a most masterly and comprehensive manner, and will see how remarkably modern investigations confirm the ancient ethnographic chart. S. R.

Is it not very significant to find the descendants of Japheth, Ham, and Shem, separately described as peopling the earth "after their families and after *their tongues*"? From these families, it would seem, have all the languages in the world been gradually evolved; and is it not perfectly consistent with this Bible statement to find eminent philologists of all ranks concurring in the conclusion, that the languages and dialects of the world are reducible to *three* distinct families or groups—the Aryan, the Semitic, and Turanian? "Comparative Philology," says Bunsen, "would have been compelled to set forth as a postulate the supposition of some such division of languages in Asia, especially on the ground of the relation of the Egyptian language to the Shemitic, even if the Bible had not assured us of the truth of this great historical event. It is matter of astonishment: it is more than a mere astounding fact, that something so purely historical, and yet divinely fixed—something so conformable to reason, and yet not to be conceived of as a mere natural development—is here related to us out of the oldest primeval period; and which now, for the first time, through the new science of philology, has become capable of being historically and philosophically explained." *W. Fraser.*—— Two points Comparative Philology has gained. 1. Nothing necessitates the admission of different independent beginnings for the material elements of the Turanian, Semitic, and Aryan branches of speech: nay, it is possible even now to point out radicals, which, under various changes and disguises, have been current in these three branches ever since their first separation. 2. Nothing necessitates the admission of different beginnings for the formal elements of the Turanian, Semitic, and Aryan branches of speech; and though it is impossible to derive the Aryan system of grammar from the Semitic, or the Semitic from the Turanian, we can perfectly understand how, either through individual influences, or by the wear and tear of grammar in its own continuous working, the different systems of grammar of Asia and Europe may have been produced. *Max Müller.*——Although it may not be possible simply to assign all Semitic tongues to the descendants of Shem, Aryan to the descendants of Japheth, and Turanian to the descendants of Ham; it is still observable that comparative philology seems to have reduced all languages to three distinct stocks, even the rapid degeneracy of barbarian dialects not wholly obscuring their relationship to one of these three families. E. H. B.

**2-5. The Sons of Japheth.** Fourteen of the primitive nations spring from Japheth. We discover their ancient seats around the Caspian, the Euxine, the Ægean, and the north of the Mediterranean. From these coast-lands they seem to have spread over Europe, northern, western, and southern Asia, and, both by Behring's Strait and the Atlantic, they at length poured into America. So true is it that Japheth was enlarged, and that by them were "the isles of the nations divided." M.

**2.** The Assyrian inscriptions have thrown a good deal of light upon the names contained in it. *Gomer*, the son of Japheth, represents the Gimirrai of the inscriptions, the Kimmerians of

classical writers. *Madai* are the Medes, a title given by the Assyrians to the multifarious tribes to the east of Kurdistan. They are first mentioned in the inscriptions about 820 B.C. *Javan* is the Greek word "Ionian," but in the Old Testament it is generally applied to the Island of Cyprus. *Sayce.*

**4.** *Tarshish* is doubtless the famous Phœnician port in Spain, outside the Strait of Gibraltar, between the two mouths of the Guadalquiver, or "great river." It was famous from the earliest antiquity for the abundance of silver and other metals yielded by its mines ; and no less for its corn. Already in the time of Solomon, a thousand years before Christ, the huge vessels which sailed to it were known as Tarshish ships, as in later days we spoke of "Indiamen," and the name even came to be applied to any very large merchantmen, to whatever port they sailed.

By KITTIM or CHITTIM, the next in the list of the "sons" of Javan, that is of the offshoots of the Greek stem, a people is indicated whose country is described as an island or coast land. The "islands of Chittim" are, indeed, frequently mentioned in Scripture. Josephus, in the generation after Christ, had already identified the name with that of Cyprus. *Geikie.*

**5. Isles of the nations.** The word here rendered *isle* is used either of islands or of places on the sea-coast. By the phrase "Isles of the Gentiles" were understood those countries of Europe and Asia Minor to which the inhabitants of Egypt and Palestine had access only by sea. E. H. B.

"There was a time," says Max Müller, "when the ancestors of the Celts, the Germans, the Sclaves, the Greeks and Italians, the Persians and the Hindoos were living together beneath the same roof, separated from the Semitic and Turanian races." And again : "There is not an English jury nowadays which, after examining the hoary documents of language, would reject the claim of a common descent and a legitimate relationship between Hindoo, Greek, and Teuton." Ethnological science, we see, regards it as morally certain, as proved beyond all reasonable doubt, that the chief races of modern Europe, the Celts, the Germans, the Græco-Italians, and the Sclaves, had a common origin with the principal race of Western Asia, the Indo-Persian. Now this result of advanced modern inductive science—a result which it is one of the proudest boasts of the nineteenth century to have arrived at—is almost exactly that which Moses, writing fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, here states as a simple historical fact. G. R.

**6. The sons of Ham.** *Thirty* primitive nations sprang from Ham. Of these, only four were immediate descendants. *Cush* has left traces of his name perhaps in the Caucasus, the Caspian, and Chuzistan. To Ethiopia the name generally refers in Scripture. *Mizra'm* is the ordinary name for Egypt in the Hebrew scriptures. *Put* has with one consent been placed beyond Egypt, in the north of the continent of Africa. *Canaan* settled in the country called after his name. M.

**6–20.** It is the simplest and best interpretation of this passage to understand it as asserting that the four races—the Egyptians, Ethiopians, Libyans, and Canaanites—were ethnically connected, being all descended from Ham ; and further, that the *primitive* people of *Babylon* were a subdivision of one of these races—namely, of the Cushite or Ethiopians, connected in some degree with the Canaanites, Egyptians, and Libyans, but still more closely with the people which dwelt upon the Upper Nile. G. R.

The posterity of Ham spread itself over Southern, Central, and Eastern Asia, Southern Europe and Northern Africa, and constitutes the stock of the African and Turanian races, as well as probably of the American tribes. It presents itself in early postdiluvian times as the first representative and teacher of art and material civilization. The Hamite race is remarkable for the early development of pantheism and hero-worship, and for the artificiality of its culture. It presents us with the darkest colors, and in the vast solitudes of Africa and Central Asia its outlying tribes must have fallen into comparative barbarism a few centuries after the Deluge. *Dawson.*

**6.** These are the first notices of Egypt which occur in Holy Scripture. The word *Mizraim*, which is here simply transliterated from the Hebrew, is elsewhere, except in 1 Chron. 1 : 8, uniformly translated by "Egypt," or "the Egyptians." It undoubtedly designates the country still known to us as Egypt ; but the origin of the name is obscure. The Hebrew "Mizraim" is a dual word, and signifies "the two Mizrs," or "the two Egypts," an expression readily intelligible from the physical conformation of the country, which naturally divides itself into "Upper" and "Lower Egypt," the long narrow valley of the Nile, and the broad tract, known as the Delta, on the Mediterranean.

**8–10.** That this passage refers to Babylon will scarcely be disputed. The words "Babel"

and "Shinar" are sufficient proof. "Babel," elsewhere generally translated "Babylon," is the exact Hebrew equivalent of the native *Babil*, which appears as the capital of Babylonia in the cuneiform records from the time of Agu-kakrimi (about B.C. 2000) to the conquest of the country by Cyrus (B.C. 538). "Shinar" is probably an equivalent of "Mesopotamia," "the country of the two rivers," and in Scripture always designates the lower part of the Tigris and Euphrates valley, the alluvial plain through which the great rivers flow before reaching the Persian Gulf. That Babylonia became at a very early date a settled government under a king is confirmed by Berosus, by Diodorus Siculus, and by the monuments. The founder of this monarchy bears the name of Nimrod; its site is the land of Shinar, or Babylonia; its ethnic character is Cushite or Ethiopian, for Nimrod is the "son," *i.e.* descendant "of Cush;" its great cities are four, Babel or Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh. Recent researches in Mesopotamia have revealed to us, as the earliest seat of power and civilization in Western Asia, a Cushite kingdom, the site of which is lower Babylonia, a main characteristic of which is its possession of large cities. Babel, Accad and Erech (Huruk) are names which occur in the early geographic nomenclature of this monarchy. . . . Another sign of the reality of Nimrod's rule is to be found in the attachment of his name to various sites in the Mesopotamia region. The remarkable ruin generally called Akkerkuf, which lies a little to the south-west of Baghdad, is known to many as the "Tel-Nimrúd;" the great dam aross the Tigris below Mosul is the "Sahr-el-Nimrúd;" one of the chief of the buried cities in the same neighborhood is called "Nimrúd" simply; and the name of "Birs-Nimrúd" attaches to the grandest mass of ruins in the lower country. G. R.

The site of Babel (Babylon) has been discovered in certain ruins near Hillah, chiefly on the opposite or eastern bank of the Euphrates, where there is a square mound called Babil by the natives. Erech has been traced also on the east bank of the Euphrates, about one hundred miles south-east of Babil, or half way between the city and the confluence of the rivers. It is the Orchoe of the Greeks, and the ruins now bear the name of Urka, or Warka. This name appears as Huruk on the cuneiform inscriptions of the place. Akkad Colonel Taylor finds in Akkerkoof, north of Babel, and about nine miles west of the Tigris, where it approaches the Euphrates. Here there is a hill or mound of ruins called Tel Nimrud. The sites of these towns fix that of Shinar, which is evidently the lower part of Mesopotamia, or, more precisely, the country west of the Tigris, and south of Is, or Hit, on the Euphrates, and Samara on the Tigris. It is otherwise called Babylonia and Chaldea. M.

It is an important fact that while the Assyrians and later Babylonians spoke a Semitic language, the most ancient inscriptions dis overed in the region of Babylonia show that the earliest inhabitants of the great cities there founded spoke a Turanian or Cushite tongue. J L. P. ——Its vocabulary is decidedly Cushite or Ethiopian, and the modern languages to which it makes the nearest approaches are those of Southern Arabia and Abyssinia. The old traditions have thus been confirmed by comparative philology, and both are side-lights to Scripture. *H. Rawlinson.* ——This agrees with the Mosaic statement that Nimrod, the founder of Babel and Erech, was a son of Cush. That dialect of the Turanian which was used in primeval Babylonia is called Akkadian, and a penitential psalm written in it is among the cuneiform texts recently published. The Akkadians were Hamites who inhabited Babylonia in prehistoric times, and were connected with the nomad races both on the north and south, in Africa and Asia. They were among the first to practise the art of writing, and they were from the earliest period devoted to the study of astronomy and the occult sciences. In their primitive tongue were preserved all the scientific, theological, and mythical records of Babylonia. They seem to be identical with the Chaldeans (Hebrew, *Kasdim*) of the Bible, one of whose chief seats was Ur, and who were instruments, simultaneously with the Sabeans, in the affliction of Job. In later times the name Chaldean was applied to the learned, and the language of the Chaldeans was that through which scientific and religious education was given. For this reason the prophet Daniel himself was made "master of the magicians, astrologers, *Chaldeans*, and soothsayers" in Babylon. Semitic tribes invaded Chaldea and Babylonia at an early period. At first they lived side by side with the Cushites, as is evidenced in the case of Abraham's family. They founded the Assyrian Empire about the thirteenth century before Christ.

Recent research has discovered the sites and remains of the ancient cities of Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. They are vast mounds of brick, scathed by fire, and left bare and desolate by the action of the elements for more than two thousand years. Their names have been seen in inscriptions upon the earliest monuments,

and upon tablets and cylinders found amid the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon. Akkad, which probably gave its name to the Akkadian tribe of Cushites, was a city famous for its science, especially astronomy. It may have been a school of Chaldean learning. The *monuments* of Assyria and Babylonia also corroborate in a most singular manner the legends on the *tablets* and the narratives in Genesis. In the very earliest sculptures on cylinders, and on the slabs which once lined the chambers of palaces, we find representations of the tree of knowledge, the serpent tempter, the tree of life guarded by cherubim, the ark, and many other things, which show how thoroughly imbued the minds of the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians were with the whole facts recorded in the early chapters of the Bible. J. L. P.

**11. Out of that land he went forth.** Nimrod "went out into Assyria" (ver. 11, marginal rendering), "and builded Nineveh"—the remarkable circumstance here being that each time four cities are mentioned in connection with Nimrod : first, the four cities of his Babylonian empire, of which Babel was the capital, and then the four cities of his conquered Assyrian empire, of which Nineveh was the capital. Now all this tallies in the most striking manner with what we read in ancient history, and with those Assyrian monuments which within our own lifetime have by the labors of Layard and Loftus been exhumed from their burial of many centuries, to give witness for the Bible. For, first, we now know that the great Asiatic empire of Babylon was of *Cushite* origin. Secondly, we are made aware that Babel was the original seat of the empire ; and, strangest of all, that the earliest Babylonian kings bore a title which is supposed to mean "four races," in reference to "the quadruple groups of capitals" of Babylonia and Assyria. Lastly, we know that, as stated in the Bible, "the Babylonian empire extended its sway northward" to Assyria, where Nineveh was founded, which in turn succeeded to the empire once held by Babel. In all these respects, therefore, the latest historical investigations have most strikingly confirmed the narrative of Scripture. A. E.

The reading "From this land he went out into Assyria," is the rendering of all the Targums, of Nachmanides, and, after them, of Drusius, Bochart, Le Clerc, De Wette, Baumgarten, Tuch, Gesenius, Knobel, Delitzsch, Kalisch, and most modern interpreters. The syntax fully admits of this interpretation ; and the general sense of the passage requires it. Nimrod is the subject here treated of. Asshur, the son of Shem, was at least a generation older than Nimrod, who may probably have first colonized the country called after him, Asshur (or Assyria). E. H. B.——The probabilities in favor of this translation are the following : 1. The discourse relates to Nimrod. 2. The words admit of it. 3. The word Asshur has occurred hitherto only as the name of a country. 4. Asshur, the person, was considerably older than Nimrod, and had probably given name to Asshur before Nimrod's projects began. 5. Asshur would have been as great a man as Nimrod, if he had founded Nineveh and its contiguous towns ; which does not appear from the text. 6. *The beginning of his kingdom* implies the addition to it contained in these verses. 7. And the phrases *in the land of Shinar*, *out of that land*, and the need of some definite locality for the second four cities, are in favor of this rendering. M. ——This translation is favored by Micah 5 : 6, where "the land of Nimrod" appears to mean Assyria. *Sayce.*——Assyria was a country intersected by the Tigris. It included the part of Mesopotamia north of Shinar, and the region between the Tigris and Mount Zagros. Its extension westward is undefined by any natural boundary. M.

**12.** Nimrod's capital was Babylon, but he founded also three other cities in the plain of Shinar, namely, Erech, Accad, and Calneh. Thence he extended his empire northward along the course of the Tigris over Assyria, where he founded a second group of capitals, Nineveh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen. P. S. ——Nineveh lay opposite the present town of Mosul, and it is from the remains of its chief palace, now buried under the mounds of Kouyunjik, that most of the Assyrian inscriptions in the British Museum have been brought. A few miles to the south of Nineveh, on the site now known as Nimrûd, was Calah, a town built by Shalmaneser I , who lived B.C. 1300. Calah subsequently fell into ruins, but was rebuilt in the ninth century before our era. "Between Nineveh and Calah" stood Resen, according to Genesis. Resen is the Assyrian *Ris-eni*, "head of the stream," which is once mentioned in an inscription of Sennacherib. Rehoboth 'Ir, or "the open spaces of the city," must have denoted the suburbs of Nineveh. *Sayce.*

**13, 14.** The Lehabim are the Libyans, while the Naphtuhim may be the people of Napata in Ethiopia. The Caphtorim or inhabitants of Caphtor are the Phœnician population settled on the coast of the Delta. From an early period the whole of this district had been colonized by the Phœnicians, and, as Phœnicia itself was

called Keft by the Egyptians, the part of Egypt in which they had settled went by the name of Keft-ur or "greater Phœnicia." *Sayce.*

It must have been at a very early period after the dispersion that MIZRAIM and his company, directing their march southward, reached at last the banks of the Nile, and laid the foundations of the great empire of EGYPT. It is beyond all doubt that Egypt was not only a very ancient kingdom, but that it possessed a very ancient and very wonderful civilization. Before the call of Abraham, the massive forms of some of the largest pyramids were already to be seen in the plain of El Gizeh. Already the walls of many tombs and temples were covered with those inscriptions which the scholars of the nineteenth century are laboring to explain. W. G. B.

The descendants of Mizraim were settled in Africa with the exception of the Philistines, who migrated into the country to which they gave their name. M.——The *Philistines* occupied the Shephelah, or that portion of the Mediterranean coast which forms the south-western boundary of Palestine. Like the inhabitants of the northern section of the same coast, though not by any means to the same degree, the Philistine people became widely known beyond their own territory. Even at the time of the Exodus they had acquired a high reputation as a powerful and warlike nation (Ex. 13 : 17). *W. Lee.*

**15-19.** From Canaan are descended eleven nations. *Zidon* is styled his first-born. The name is retained in the well-known town on the coast of Phœnicia, which is accordingly of the highest antiquity among the cities of that region. The Sidonians were reckoned co-extensive with the Phœnicians, and are mentioned by Homer. *Heth.* This tribe dwelt about Hebron and in the mountains around, and perhaps still further north in the districts extending toward the Euphrates. M.

**15.** In "Sidon" and "Heth" we seem to have the names of individual men ; but when it is added that he also "begat the Jebusite and the Amorite," etc., etc., it is clear that we are dealing not with single generations, but with a condensed abstract of the origin and growth of tribes. No definite information is given in such abstract as to the lapse of time. *Argyll.* ——Here Sidon represents the race of which it was the early prominent seat of activity, being mentioned in Joshua as already "great Sidon" (Josh 11 : 8). And in denominating Sidon "the firstborn of Canaan," the narrative records the great historic fact that at a period estimated (by many) to be some four thousand years ago, "a tribe speaking a Semitic tongue abandoned the nomad habits of their ancestors, and building some rude huts beside a creek, sheltered by an inland breakwater, took to the sea, and called themselves 'Sidonians' or 'Fishermen.' It was a memorable day for humanity, when the first colonizing and commercial power which the world had seen, launched its rude craft tentatively on the Mediterranean. On that day the arts and culture of the East may be said to have set out on their journey to the West, and the long process to have begun by which the sceptre was transferred from the primeval 'river kingdoms' to the republics of the Inland Sea, and from these passed over to the 'ocean empires' of modern times." S. C. B.

**16.** The *Jebusite* had his chief seat in and around Jerusalem, which was called Jebus, from his chief ; and the citadel of which was wrested from him only in the time of David. The *Amorite* was one of the most important and extensive tribes. Five kings of this nation dwelt in the mountains afterward occupied by Judah, and two on the east of the Jordan, in Heshbon and Bashan, north of Moab (Nu. 21 : 13 ; Deut. 4 : 47). The eastern Amorites were conquered under Moses, the western under Joshua. A remnant of them were made bondsmen by Solomon. They survived the captivity (Ez. 9 : 1). The *Girgashite* seems to have lived on the east of the Jordan.

**17.** The *Hivite* was found at Shalem, Gibeon, and also at the foot of Hermon and Antilibanus. The *Arkite* probably dwelt near a town called Arke or Cæsarea Libani, lying some miles north of Tripolis, at the foot of Lebanon. Its ruins are still extant at Tel Arka. The *Sinite* is supposed to have dwelt in Sinna, a town mentioned by Strabo, not far from Arke.

**18.** The *Arvadite* dwelt in Arvad, Aradus, now Ruad, a Phœnician town on an island of the same name. The *Zemarite* has been traced in the town Simura, the ruins of which were found by Shaw at the western foot of Lebanon, under the name of Sumra. The *Hamathite* was the inhabitant of Hamath, at present Hamah. It is situated on the Orontes, and held an important place in the history of Israel. The land of Hamath was of great extent, including the town of Riblah (2 K. 25 : 21) and reaching even to Antioch. The entrance of Hamath, the northern part of the valley between Lebanon and Antilibanus, formed the utmost boundary of Palestine to the north (Nu. 13 : 21 ; Jos. 13 : 5 ; 1 K. 8 : 65). Its king was in alliance with David (2 S. 8 : 10). M.

The *name of Canaan* (low country) is always exclusively applied to the country west of Jordan. It is as much the name of the people as of the country. The strange circumstance that a land so decidedly mountainous should obtain such a name becomes only intelligible by this historical statement in the table of nations, according to which the Canaanites had first settled in the *low country of Phœnicia*, whence they gradually spread to the Dead Sea. The name Palaistine is the Greek mode of pronouncing the word which originally applied to the territory of the Philistines along the southern shore of the Mediterranean, but was extended by the Romans to the whole country. In the Bible the following names also occur : the land of the Hebrews (Gen. 40 : 15) ; the Lord's land (Hosea 9 : 3) ; the holy land (Zech. 2 : 12) ; the coast, or the land of Israel (Judges 19 : 29 ; Ezek. 7 : 2) ; the land of promise (Heb. 11 : 9). K.

By this account it appears that the posterity of Canaan were both numerous and rich, and very pleasantly seated ; and yet Canaan was under a curse, a divine curse, and not a curse causeless. Those that are under the curse of God may yet perhaps thrive and prosper greatly in this world ; for we cannot know love or hatred, the blessing or the curse, by what is *before* us, but by what is *within* us. The curse of God always works really and terribly : but perhaps it is a *secret* curse, a curse to the soul, and does not work visibly ; or a *slow* curse, and does not work immediately ; but sinners are by it reserved for and bound over to a day of wrath. H.

After the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, the residue of the Canaanites wandered northward to the foot of Lebanon, and the coast of Northern Syria ; others crossed the sea to Africa, Carthage, Greece (Cadmus), and the other Phœnician colonies of the Mediterranean. Hence the expression (v. 18) "*afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.*" C. G. B.

In point of political intercourse with Shem Japheth in early times sinks comparatively into the shade, and Ham assumes the prominent place. Babylon, Cush, Egypt, and Canaan are the powers which come into contact with Shem, in that central line of human history which is traced in the Bible. Hence it is that in the table of nations special attention is directed to Cush, Nimrod, Mizraim, and to the tribes and borders of Canaan. M.

**21-31. The sons of Shem.** The history of the growth, development, and early migrations of the Semitic race, and its subdivision into the various families of Elam in Persia, Asshur in Assyria, Arphaxad in Northern Assyria, Joktan in Arabia, Lud in the highlands of Armenia, and Aram in Mesopotamia and Syria is here given in a concise form. To these details ethnological investigations may add some interesting facts, but to their accuracy and clearness they add little more than corroborating evidence. *E. H. Palmer.*——Heber, the founder of the Hebrew race, is classed among the sons of Shem, through Arphaxad, and along with Elam, Asshur, Lud, and Aram. In other words, the Hebrews are connected by common descent, with the people of Elymais or Elam on the Persian Gulf, east of the Tigris ; with the Assyrians on the north-east of that river ; with the people of Arphaxad, still further north, among the mountains of Southern Armenia, immediately east of what is now the Lake Van ; with the Lydians and the Semitic peoples of Asia Minor ; and with the Aramean or Syrian nations stretching thence, south-east, to the Euphrates. *Geikie.*

**21. Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber.** As Ham is specially called the father of Canaan, so probably Shem is designated as the father of Eber. The Hebrews and the Canaanites were brought into constant conflict and exemplified respectively the characters of the Hamites and the Shemites, their characters and their destinies. E. H. B.

**22.** *Twenty-six* of the primitive nations are descended from Shem, of which *five* are immediate. *Elam* was settled in a part of the modern Persia, to which he gave name. M.——Elam —the High Land—an extensive country on the east side of the lower Tigris, bordered on the west by the province of Babylon, on the north by Assyria and Media, and on the south by the Persian Gulf. It thus embraced parts of the present Laristan, Chusistan, and Arabistan ; a picturesque, mountainous region : its capital, at least in later times, being the famous city of Shushan, so often mentioned in Daniel as a royal residence of the kings of Babylon, and in Esther as a favorite with the kings of Persia. *Geikie.*

*Asshur* seems to have originally occupied a district of Mesopotamia, which was bounded on the east by the Tigris. M.——It is plain from the context that *Arphaxad* must signify Chaldea ; and this conclusion is verified by the fact that the name might also be pronounced Arpa-Chesed, or "border of Chaldea" Chesed is the singular of Casdim, the word used in the Old Testament to denote the inhabitants of Babylonia. *Sayce.*——*Lud* is usually identified with the Lydians, who by migration at length

reached and gave their name to a part of the west coast of Asia Minor. *Aram* gave name to the upper parts of Mesopotamia and the parts of Syria north of Palestine. Hence we read of Aram Naharaim (of the two rivers), Aram Dammesek (of Damascus), Aram Maakah on the south-west border of Damascus, about the sources of the Jordan, Aram Beth Rechob in the same neighborhood, and Aram Zoba to the north of Damascus. From Aram are descended four later nations.

**23.** *Uz* is the chief of a people having their seat in the north of Arabia Deserta, between Palestine and the Euphrates. From this Uz it is possible that the sons of Nahor and of Seir (Gen. 22 : 21 ; 36 : 28) obtained their name. Job dwelt in this land. M.

**24. Salah begat Eber.** The name *Salah* appears to signify *sending forth, extension*, as *Eber*, the name of his son, signifies *passing over*. Many of the names in these genealogies are significant, and were probably given to their bearers late in life, or even historically, after their deaths. Salah and Eber seem to point to this fact, that the descendants of Arphaxad were now beginning to spread forth from the first cradle of the Semitic race. E. H. B.

**25.** It has rightly been supposed that this verse furnishes an approximate indication of *the time of the Dispersion*. Some have fixed the date in the year 101 after the flood, being the year of the birth of Peleg. But the expression " in his days," seems to indicate a later period, when Peleg was a man of note ; and also the impossibility that so many persons as would have been requisite for the building of the tower should have existed at that period. Peleg lived 239 years, and we may therefore place this event toward the close of the third or the commencement of the fourth century after the flood. K. ——The genealogy is now specially concerned with the descendants of Shem and the ancestry of the promised race, which is here traced down to Peleg to be continued further in ch. 11 : 18, sqq. The two races, which sprang from Eber, soon separated very widely from each other, the one, Eber and his family, spreading north-westward toward Mesopotamia and Syria, the other, the Joktanides, southward into Arabia. There is a general consent in favor of the colonization of Southern Arabia by the descendants of Joktan, with the names of whom correspond several of the districts and cities of that country.

**28. Sheba.** We read much of Sheba, a country in Arabia Felix, abounding in gold, precious stones, frankincense, and famous for its merchandise. The Arabic and Greek accounts of the Sabæans, a people, whose capital was Saba or Mariaba, three or four days' journey from Senaa, correspond thoroughly with all this.

**29. Ophir.** On no geographical question has a greater diversity of opinion existed than on the site of Ophir. The position of Ophir, as a son of Joktan, and the settlement of the other Joktanides in Arabia, form a strong argument in favor of placing Ophir in Arabia also. The historical notices, however, in the books of Kings and Chronicles have inclined many to place Ophir either in India or in Africa : whilst others have thought, that two Ophirs are mentioned in Scripture, one in Arabia, the other in India or Ceylon. E. H. B.

From a review of these lands it is evident that Shem occupied a much smaller extent of territory than either of his brothers. The mountains beyond the Tigris, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Levant, the Archipelago, and the Black Sea, bound the countries that were in part peopled by Shem Arabia. Syria, and Assyria contained the great bulk of the Shemites, intermingled with some of the Hamites. The Cushites, Canaanites, and Philistines trench upon their ground. The rest of the Hamites peopled Africa, and such countries as were supplied from it. The Japhethites spread over all the rest of the world. In this table there are seventy names, exclusive of Nimrod, of heads of families, tribes, or nations descended from the three sons of Noah,—fourteen from Japheth, thirty from Ham, and twenty-six from Shem. It appears that the subdivisions are traced further in Ham and much further in Shem than in Japheth, and that they are pursued only in those lines which are of importance for the coming events in the history of Shem.

**32.** This passage explains the table of nations, in which they are said to be distinguished, not merely by birth and land, but " every one after his tongue." It is therefore attached to the table as a needful appendix, and thus completes the history of the nations so far as it is carried on by the Bible. At this point the line of history leaves the universal, and by a rapid contraction narrows itself into the individual, in the person of him who is to be ultimately the parent of a chosen seed. M.

One modern view of Biblical inspiration is to the effect, that while the writers of Scripture are to be held as infallible guides in whatever relates to religion and morality, on all other matters they are to be considered as simply on a par with other men, equally limited in their knowledge, equally liable to error, not a whit superior to their contemporaries, or in advance

of their age. The accordance of the ethnology of Genesis with the latest results of modern ethnographical science, seems to deal a rude blow to such a theory. Origen's argument has always seemed sound, that if in the material world God has wrought every minutest part to a finish and a perfection the highest that is possible to conceive, *much more* is it to be believed that in the far more important treasure of his word he has left nothing incomplete, but has given to every jot and tittle his full care, the utmost perfection of which it was capable, so that the whole is designed and is the utterance to man of absolute wisdom. G. R.

The Bible is a *Book of Numbers*. It is a trait maintained consistently throughout. From the exact nativities of the Antediluvian ages, from the precise dates of the rising and subsiding waters of the flood, from Noah's almanac, as we may say, down to Haggai's diary, or careful noting of the very year and month and day of the month in which the word of the Lord came unto him, it is all of a piece, one consistent number giving, time-keeping record. The Jews, if there is any truth in their history at all, were a journalizing people, a genealogizing people ; the Bible is their family book of entries, just as we now employ certain pages of it as a register of births and deaths. Precise statistics are everywhere, and everywhere purporting to be from men who knew, and who are, in the main, supposed to be recording known present or passing facts. There is nothing like it in the history of any other people on earth ; certainly not in any early history. Let any one compare the 1st volume of Grote's History of Greece with the Pentateuch, the confused and utterly unchronological annals of the Doric, Hellenic, and Eolic races with even the earliest part of the Mosaic writings or the history of the Patriarchs, and he will see at once the difference. Darkness, confusion, shadows, deformities, painful perplexities or hopeless riddles, in the one,—the clear geography, the direct chronology, the fact consistency, the lifelike minuteness of coloring, the strange combination of the marvellous in such perfect affinity with the familiar and the domestic that it loses its marvel,—all this in the other. Even after the commencement of what is called the "historical period," or the introduction of the Olympiads, the Grecian chronology is full of obscurities. It is not easy to fix the times of the historians themselves ; there is a doubt about Herodotus ; the Heraclidæ and Lycurgus fail of being precisely determined by some centuries ; but more than a thousand years before Herodotus, the Hebrew writings set forth a regular chronology. Before Hellenians and Dorians had set foot in Greece, many centuries before even the Pelasgi "were in the land," we are told the time of life, and have the means of reckoning the very year, when Abraham went forth from Ur of the Chaldees. There is no escape from it : the Jewish history is the boldest of lies, the most unscrupulous of forgeries, and, at the same time, the most inexplicable of literary enigmas, or it is *the truth*, attested inwardly and confirmed outwardly, as no other ancient historical account was ever attested in the multiplied annals of the race. T. L.

The Bible unfolds the oldest history in the world. No other comes within sight of its earliest records. The Pentateuch was written by Moses a thousand years before Herodotus recited his history at the public games of Greece and the boy Thucydides wept lest he might fail in future rivalry, and more than twelve hundred years before the two Egyptian writers, Manetho and Eratosthenes, endeavored to explain the revolutions of their country. Ctesias and Berosus, the one thirty and the other a hundred and fifty years later than Herodotus, followed him with their somewhat conflicting accounts of Chaldean and Assyrian struggles and triumphs. The earliest Greek historian was thus the contemporary of Ezra and Nehemiah ; and, long before Manetho had arranged the details of Egyptian dynasties, the prophet Malachi had closed the Old Testament record. The ancient testimonies which monuments and written documents have most opportunely supplied within the present century, indeed in a large measure within the present generation, have not only demolished all the old reasoning against the Bible, but have so vindicated its historical trustworthiness, that "Moses and the Prophets" are now left in undisturbed possession of the watch-towers from which many centuries ago they spoke to the Israelites, and through them to the whole world. In closely examining the tenth chapter, we find such diversity of history as precludes exact classification, but its general statements are beginning to admit of comparatively easy historical exposition. To this chapter, as an ethnological table, scholars of opposite religious tendencies have united in paying homage. *W. Fraser.*

Here is an exhibition of the ultimate relationship of all the nations far and near, outwardly and inwardly so diverse as the weighty thought of this survey. Israel is but one member of universal humanity. All men and nations are of the same race, the same value, and the same

consideration, *brethren and kindred*. This Biblical consideration sets out from the greatness and entirety of humanity, before it turns itself to the history of an individual people, the people of God, and then at length by the mouths of the prophets, points forward to the end and ultimate goal of this several history, the union of all nations in the kingdom of God. *Dillmann.*

With this list the book of Genesis takes leave of mankind in general, and revelation henceforth limits itself to a single chosen race. The register of nations is intended to keep in memory the *original brotherhood of all the nations of the earth*. This is a thought beyond the reach of all antiquity, with the exception of Israel. Among the cultivated Greeks it was not till the time of Alexander the Great, and chiefly through Stoicism, that the idea of a common world-citizenship of man found expression ; for the antithesis of Greeks and barbarians was invincible. When the Apostle Paul preached on the Areopagus, "He made of one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," he attacked the very heart of heathenism and Athenian pride. O.

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### Outline of Race History.

Each race, by Divine appointment, has its own work to do, its own errand to accomplish. The Hamitic race, hot, quick, versatile, leads off for a time in arts and arms ; but presently the glow becomes a fever, imagination masters the judgment, passion debauches conscience, and the plunge is made into barbarism. The elder Babylonian Empire soon passes away, and Egypt becomes in time the basest of kingdoms. The Semitic race, finer in fibre, of purer tastes, more thoughtful, intuitive and reverent, gives birth, indeed, to Phœnician commerce, and, from the shores of Carthage, thunders at the gates of Rome ; but, in the main, prefers, even at the risk of historic immobility, to hold its original seat away from the sea, and there nurse the religions which are to rule the world. The only cosmopolitan religions are the Semitic : Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. Heliopolis was for Egypt, and Delphi for Greece ; but Mecca is for millions of men not Arabs, and Jerusalem is the mother of us all. The Japhethic race, of iron muscle and of iron will, stirred by a mysterious impulse, turns its back upon the seats of rising empire, pushes off northward and westward, into less hospitable climes, and there awaits the later call of Providence. In due time we behold the language and letters of Greece ; Roman roads, legions and laws ; and, finally, the whole life of modern Europe and America, now striking for the dominion of the world. Just now, the race that was first, is last ; and the one that was last, is first. But the day is coming, when all shall enjoy together what each has contributed in its turn to win.

What is thus true of the larger divisions of mankind, is equally true of all. There is that in the Keltic race, for example, distinguishing it from every other, which has always distinguished it, and which inevitably qualifies the career of every nation which has the Keltic blood very largely in its veins. Better was it than the Iberian, or the Iberian would not have retired before it ; but inferior to the Teutonic, or the Teutonic would not have overborne it. Between the Teutonic and the Slavonic, the issue is still impending. The best races are the amalgams. An unmixed race will never hold its own ; and, ordinarily, the deterioration is rapid. Within certain limits, the mixing of races has a tendency to multiply the good points, and eliminate the bad ones. As in France, where the modern Frenchman is better than either the Kelt, the Frank, or the Norman, of whom mainly he has been composed. As in the England of to-day, so greatly in advance of the England of Arthur, of Alfred, or of the Norman Conqueror. As in North America, where Providence is now preparing a new amalgam, which appears to have forces in it, and a destiny before it, more grand than either of its European ingredients. R. D. H.

# Section 35.

## THE DISPERSION.

GENESIS 11 : 1-9.

1 AND the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they
2 journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar ; and they dwelt there. And they
3 said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick
4 for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven, and let us make us a name ; lest we be scattered
5 abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the
6 tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language ; and this is what they begin to do : and now nothing will be
7 withholden from them, which they purpose to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound
8 their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth : and they left off to build the city.
9 Therefore was the name of it called Babel ; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth : and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

The same record that affirms and traces the original unity of the race, also gives us the oldest and the only account of its dispersion, its early locations, migrations and movements We are in a track otherwise untrodden. It is but recently that we have been able fully to test the correctness and value of this ancient source of information. S. C. B.

**1, 2.** This account of the confusion of the language of men and the dispersion of nations over the earth, is in the order of thought and of time anterior to the ethnological chart in the tenth chapter. The tenth chapter presents really the results which followed the confusion of the "lip," as recorded in the eleventh chapter. The record gives us to understand that this confusion occurred during the era of Peleg, the fifth in descent from Noah. "The whole earth was of one language and one speech." To take the Hebrew *Saphah* literally, "was of one *lip* and one stock of words." In the previous chapter the word "tongue" is used to describe what is here expressed in two words. "One stock of words" refers to the substance and material of language, as the "one lip" refers to the mode and manner of using and connecting the matter of speech. Until this time then the original language taught Adam as we most suppose by inspiration had continued without change. The occasion of the change was that as certain families became enterprising, and pressed on from the original seat of the family of Noah, in the highlands of Armenia, they came to the plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris, very fertile, and affording the means of rapid advance in wealth and population. And a determination is immediately formed to make here not only a permanent abode, but a grand centre of empire. S. R.

Man's "evil imagination," which remained after the flood, now took a different direction, and shows itself in an impious attempt to unite the whole of mankind in rebellion against God. The first land peopled after the flood was Shinar, Mesopotamia, or Babylonia. The two great rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, water this tract of country, which in ancient times was renowned for its fertility, though now a barren plain. The vast plain has a gentle declension from west to east. The Euphrates, when the snow melts on the mountains, overflows its banks, and descends into the level country of Mesopotamia. From this circumstance the inhabitants were induced, at an early period in its history, to convey the water by means of canals over the whole country ; so that in time it was entirely intersected by these tributaries from the Euphrates and Tigris. Herodotus speaks as an eye-witness of the astonishing fertility of Babylonia. *Gerl.*

The very greatness of the new beginning of humanity on earth evinces that the primitive man was a magnificent being even in his wickedness. There is no hint here of any gradual development from savagery. If not scientific and civilized in our modern sense, he was at least a being of great power both of body and mind. If he had everything to learn, man learned most

rapidly. Even aside from the inspired history the researches among the earliest monuments of man's existence reveal a degree of knowledge supposed to belong only to modern times. The skill in mechanical arts and manufactures, whether gained scientifically or not, was evidently the result of mental and bodily power of the highest order. These early men had great aims, attempted great things, and accomplished great things. Though, as we have seen in chapter 10, there are but a few words concerning their doings, yet these are stirring words. Nimrod, the mighty hunter, taking the kingdom of Babylon; settlements rapidly following it on the Upper Euphrates; cities sprang up. It was an era of city builders, empire founders. Along with the pioneer and colonizing spirit are exhibited all the tendencies to associated effort. In this respect the inspired account here is fully confirmed by all the researches of our age among those earlier monuments of human existence upon earth. S. R.——The further we ascend toward the commencement of human enterprise, the greater do we find the combination of skill and effort in the production of imposing and colossal works of art. Probably the labor bestowed on the tower of Babel—certainly that bestowed on many a structure in Egypt, pyramid, labyrinth, or temple—would suffice to build a modern city of very respectable dimensions. The truth is, for several centuries after the flood, something of the antediluvian spirit and fashion seems to have prevailed among mankind. Everything was designed and executed on a grand scale, and in the most durable style. *Lindsley.*

**1–9.** We have here the scriptural account of the meaning of the name "Babel," the primitive term which the Greeks converted into "Babylon," but which remains even now attached to a portion of the ruins that mark the site of the great city, almost in its original form. It would not have been surprising if profane history had contained no notice of this matter, since it belongs to a very remote antiquity, a time anterior to records. But the fact seems to be that the Babylonians either recorded at the time, or at any rate bore in memory, the transaction. Two Greek writers, who drew their Babylonian histories from native sources, noticed the occurrence, and gave an account of it, which is in most respects very close to the biblical narrative. Alexander Polyhistor said, that "Once upon a time, when the whole race of mankind were of one language, a certain number of them set to work to build a great tower, thinking to climb up to heaven; but God caused a wind to blow, and cast the tower down, at the same time giving to every man his own peculiar speech. On which account the city was called Babylon." Abydenus, a somewhat later historian, treated the subject at greater length. "At this time," he said, "the ancient race of men were so puffed up with their strength and tallness of stature, that they began to despise and contemn the gods, and labored to erect that very lofty tower, which is now called Babylon, intending thereby to scale heaven. But when the building approached the sky, behold, the gods called in the aid of the winds, and by their help overthrew the tower, and cast it to the ground. The name of the ruins is still called Babel; because until this time all men had used the same speech, but now there was sent upon them a confusion of many and diverse tongues." These passages have long been known, and have been adduced as probable evidence that the native Babylonian records contained a notice respecting the tower of Babel and the confusion of human speech. But it is only recently that such a record has been unearthed. Among the clay tablets brought from Babylonia by Mr. George Smith, and deposited in the British Museum, is one unfortunately much mutilated, which seems clearly to have contained the Babylonian account of the matter. G. R.

**3.** The Babylonian soil furnished splendid architectural materials for such a purpose. There abounds a fine clay, mingled with sand, which, even sun-dried, forms a good material. But for this great work, to make it ever-during, they will burn them thoroughly. Then the pits or springs of asphalt furnish a cement which hardens into stone. It was a grand conception, even in its wickedness. S. R.——Herodotus describes the building of the walls of Babylon much as the sacred history describes this building of the tower of Babel. He says a deep foss was dug all round the city, from which the mud was taken in large bricks and burnt in furnaces. Then for mud or mortar, they used hot bitumen, and so built the walls of the city. He mentions a town called Is, with a river of the same name near it, about eight days' journey from Babylon, where much bitumen was obtained and carried to Babylon for the building of the city. E. H. B.——It is interesting to notice how exactly what we know of early Babylonian architecture tallies with what we read in Scripture: "Let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime (or rather, bitumen) had they for mortar." The small burnt bricks laid in bitumen are still

there ; not only in the tower but in the still existing ruins of the ancient palace of Babel, which was coeval with the building of the city itself. A. E.

**4.** There appears a threefold design. "Let us make us a name"—"whose top may reach to heaven"—"lest we be scattered abroad,"—severally evincing pride, arrogance against God, and a conspiracy to establish a universal temporal monarchy in opposition to the divine purposes. In the prediction of Noah (chap. 9 : 25), and in the benediction of Jehovah (chap. 9 : 1, 7), it was intimated that men should spread themselves abroad, and that servitude should be the lot of Ham. In both ways they attempted to resist, and independently of God to carry their own will into effect. C. G. B.

The sons of Noah were to be "*divided after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.*" This dispersion and these distinctions are a part of the original divine order ; the fulfilment of God's designs for the race which He had made after His own likeness. To overturn that order, to frustrate that design, the wandering tribes met on the plain of Shinar, and said (in other words), let us build a society, not upon faith in the unseen God and His covenant, but upon faith in brick walls. Let us provide securities against the divine power, lest it should crush us. The plan was confounded : they left off to build the tower. The earth was overspread, though they determined that it should not be. Distinct families and nations were established, in spite of this attempt to reduce all into one indistinguishable mass. But we are told also that a Babel society *was* established by a mighty hunter, in whom all have recognized the beginner of the great Asiatic tyrannies. Polities rose up based upon a worship of natural powers, feared, not trusted ; whose cruel purposes were to be averted by such a means as human wit and strength could devise. The rulers of these kingdoms owned no Lord of man after whose image they and their subjects were formed ; they bowed to the powers which they thought they discerned in the storm, or in the dark sky : powers to which they attributed their own qualities ; with which they had no sympathy ; whose dominion was shadowed forth in their own. Such is society according to man's conception and arrangement of it. Society, of which self-will is the king, and animals are the subjects. But this was not God's society. *Maurice.*

It should ever be borne in mind that the whole race during the space of 500 years after the flood had the opportunity to be thoroughly evangelized. They had the revelation of God to the antediluvian world, enlarged and confirmed in the covenant with Noah, the germinal gospel of Eden already springing forth and shooting up to the view of all in the sacrifices, the typical distinction of clean and unclean, the reverence for human life. They had the instruction of Noah, the great preacher of righteousness, for three hundred and fifty years ; and the teaching of Shem, who had been contemporary with Lamech and Methuselah a century before the flood. And the argument could now be enforced by the recent terrors of the flood. Yet in face of all this, men set themselves to resist and defy the revelations of Jehovah. The very existence of heathenism in the world at all evinces the intense enmity of fallen humanity to the true God. If man had not been as depraved as the Scriptures represent, there need never have been any heathenism. S. R.

How do these men reckon without God! "Come, let us build ;" as if there had been no stop but in their own will ; as if both earth and time had been theirs. Still do all natural men build Babel ; forecasting their own plots so resolutely, as if there were no power to countermand them. It is just with God that peremptory determinations seldom prosper ; whereas those things which are fearfully and modestly undertaken, commonly succeed. . . . Pride ever looks at the highest : the first man would know as God ; these would dwell as God ; covetousness and ambition know no limits. And what if they had reached up to heaven? some hills are as high as they could hope to be, and yet are no whit the better ; no place alters the condition of nature : an angel is glorious, though he be upon earth ; and man is but earth, though he be above the clouds. The nearer they had been to heaven, the more subject should they have been to the violences of heaven ; to thunders, lightnings, and those other higher inflammations ; what had this been, but to thrust themselves into the hands of the revenger of all wicked insolencies? *Bp. H.*

**5. The Lord came down.** The interposing providence of God is here set forth in a sublime simplicity, suited to the early mind of man. **6.** In like simplicity is depicted the self-willed, god-defying spirit of combination and ambition which had now budded in the imagination of man. *The people is one,*—one race, with one purpose. *And they have all one lip.* They understand one another's mind. *This is their beginning.* The Lord sees in this commencement the seed of growing evil. *And now*

*nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.* Now that they have made this notable beginning of concentration, ambition, and renown, there is nothing in this way which they will not imagine or attempt. M.

**7.** In allusion to the boastful language in which the builders of Babel and of its tower had in their self-confidence stated their purpose : "Go to, let us make brick," etc., Jehovah expressed *His* purpose of defeating their folly, using the same words : "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language." And by this simple means, without any outward visible interference, did the Lord arrest the grandest attempt of man's rebellion, and by confounding their language "scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth." "Therefore is the name of it called Babel, or confusion." What a commentary does this history afford to the majestic declarations of the second Psalm ! A. E.——He could have hindered the laying of the first stone ; and might as easily have made the trench for their foundation the grave of the builders ; but he loves to see what wicked men would do, and to let fools run themselves out of breath : what monument should they have had of their own madness and of his powerful interruption, if the walls had risen to no height ? To stop them in the midst of their course, he meddles not with either their hands or their feet, but their tongues ; not by pulling them out, not by loosing their strings, nor by making them say nothing, but by teaching them to say too much : here is nothing varied but the sound of letters ; even this frustrates the work and befools the workmen : how easy it is for God ten thousand ways to correct and forestall the greatest projects of men ! He that taught Adam the first words, taught them words that never were. *Bp. H.*

The diversity of tongues is still God's will,—is something abiding and good : but sin was the cause of the false unity and of the separation, and severed the one body into many members ; so that now the members are strange and hostile to one another. The Gospel of Christ appeared to teach men that they were all of one blood, all had one common head, all had one God as their Father ; then the tongues of men, divided through pride at Babel, were united by love and humility at Zion. *Gerl* ——Multiplicity of language had not been given by the Holy Ghost for a blessing to the Church, if the world had not been before possessed with multiplicity of languages for a punishment : hence it is that the building of our Sion rises no faster because our tongues are divided ; happy were the Church of God if we all spake but one language. *Bp. H.*

The building of the tower stands as the boundary between the unity of the primitive world and the conflicting movements of diverse tribes in subsequent ages. It explains what otherwise would have remained inexplicable—a manifold diversity of language, with a singular unity of apparently original structure. The moral cause of the dispersion has been thus stated : "The unity which had hitherto bound together the human family was the community of one God, and of one divine worship. This unity did not satisfy them ; inwardly they had already lost it ; and therefore it was that they strove for another. There is therefore an ungodly unity which they sought to reach through such self-invented, sensual, outward means ; while the very thing they feared, they predicted as their punishment." (*Delitzsch*) Their purpose was defeated by the confusion of their tongues, or rather by the sudden use of three languages instead of one. The introduction of three tongues or languages would cause such confusion as would put an end to the undertaking. It would have been inconsistent with the method of the Divine government, so far as we can judge, to introduce a multitude of dialects, and make each man unintelligible to his companion ; and it appears from the record itself that the confusion was orderly or regulated, for we are told anticipatively in the tenth chapter, that the descendants of Japheth, of Ham, and of Shem, were divided "after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations." Of each of the three, successively, is the same account given. *W. Fraser.*

In this matter the account singularly accords with the highest results of modern comparative philology, which concludes that all languages were from one centre originally, and are all divided into three great branches. The one primitive tongue was made manifold by diversifying the law of structure without interfering with the material of which it was composed. The bases or roots of words may remain, while the etymological laws then work and form vocables. Thus from the root *fer* we have in Latin ferre, ferens, fert, ferebat, etc. ; in Greek phere, pherein, pheron, etc , and in the Hebrew pereh, paurch, etc., according to the primitive law of each language. Now, the confusion at Babel was of the "lip," the formative laws of language, without effecting the substance. This was, of course, effective. They could no more converse together than an Englishman and a

German. As the result of this confusion, the language of the earth divided into three great stocks, from which, according to the ethnologists, all of the near three hundred languages of the earth have sprung as variations. S. R.

What the original language was, common to the race up to this point, has been much debated by learned men without arriving at uniform and satisfactory results. Whether it was, as some suppose, the veritable Hebrew tongue; or as others think, the Aramaic, *i.e.* the Chaldee; or whether it is utterly lost—these are the alternatives; but for the choice between them we can have no very positive data. That the Aramaic (Chaldee) tongue, closely allied to the Hebrew, held its place for ages in the valley of the Euphrates, strongly favors its claim to be, if not the very tongue of Noah, at least of the same family. These points suggest probabilities but fall short of certainty. H. C.

There is no reason why we should think the confusion of tongues the work of a moment; for details could not be given in so short a notice. Who does not see that the early days of the human race are here given with the utmost brevity, and that the annals of many years are crowded between a few commas? It is more likely that discord was first sent among men, and that from this cause, leaving the work unfinished, they scattered into neighboring regions, and gradually wandered further and further off; and that their languages gradually changed as they were thus isolated over the face of the earth. The facts may have been brought succinctly together by Moses in his compendious narrative, but those interpreters surely err who think that they were carried out to completion by God almost as quickly as the verses themselves are read. *Clerici.*

**8. Scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth.** The migrations of the three primitive families took place from the central regions of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria; and, by successive colonizations, established far distant communities, and various modes of society and government; the Phœnicians, Arabians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Libyans, southward; the Persians, Ethiopians, Indians, and Chinese, eastward; the Scythians, Celts, and Tartars, northward; and the Goths, Greeks, and Latins, even as far as the Peruvians and Mexicans of South America, and the Indian tribes of North America, westward. All these various inhabitants of the globe retain a striking affinity in the leading principles of their language, customs, and religions, however diversified in process of time from each other by local circumstances: such affinity evincing their common descent from one and the same parent stock. *Hales.*

Those tribes that earliest found and retained their near and permanent abodes, other things being equal, earliest developed and best retained the highest forms of life and art. Such was the case in Chaldea, Babylonia, India, with their fertile and productive plains and mighty streams, and, above all, Egypt with its marvellous position close along the banks of its matchless river of clock-work overflow, and its wonderful facilities and resources, and means of luxury, and also along the eastern and northern parts of the Mediterranean, where everything invited to commerce, to invention and production—climate, soil, minerals and harbors, especially in Phœnicia, with her two noble harbors in convenient nearness to the trade and civilization of the more ancient East and to the new products of the rising West. The tribes that drove each other through the length of Europe, through its grim forests and over its mountains, across its rushing streams, and through its winter snows, never developed the higher traits of human life till they too at last became stationary, and that was only after they had nearly extinguished what may have been the settled civilization of their earlier home. S. C. B.

Upon the dispersion, as men travelled further from their original residence into colder, more sterile or unhealthful climes, into mountainous regions, impervious forests or deserts, especially when the colonies were small and indifferently furnished with artisans and mechanics or with implements and utensils of agriculture and carpentry, in such circumstances it is easy to account for the speedy degeneracy of numerous tribes, and for their lapse into a barbarous and savage state. Thus, Northern Asia, the greater part of Africa, the islands of the Mediterranean Sea and of the ocean, Europe and America, appear to have been inhabited by rude and migratory hordes as far back as history and tradition extend; while the same history and tradition, together with Scripture, assure us that Chaldea, Assyria, Phœnicia and Egypt, perhaps India and other eastern countries, were civilized and polished from the remotest times or from the beginning. And these have proved the fountain of civilization, letters and the arts, to every other part of the globe. From the building of Babel to the period at which Egypt appears on the page of authentic history, a great and flourishing empire famed alike for wealth and power, for wisdom and science, the interval is short; the steps are few and easily marked. *Lindsley.*

The great law of dispersion of the nations has had a steadfast and uniform assertion in the providence of God over the nations and over His church. It is not the purpose of God to permit these universal empires under a fallen and depraved humanity. And well, indeed, for the human race that it is so. In their ambitious dreams, the Nebuchadnezzars, the Alexanders, the Cæsars, the Napoleons, have thought to defy the ordinance of separation enacted in the confusion of languages at Babel. But most notably have they failed. Nay, the Jehovah—Head of the Church—has not intrusted even His imperfectly sanctified people to exist in a universal empire, however earnestly men have struggled to actualize their ideal of an external universal empire in the world, for the spiritual government of men. True, indeed, such an ideal of universal empire figures in all the prophetic visions of Messiah. But that shall be only in an era when humanity shall be universally regenerative and under the rule of the only universal King, who is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" The history of the Christian Church has developed the same tendency of human nature to the centralization of spiritual power, and the like checks have been interposed by Divine Providence. As soon as Christianity became corrupted and tending to apostasy, then, under the same propensity which showed itself at Babel, spiritual Babel-builders attempted to "make to themselves a name" by a universal ecclesiastical empire concentrating its power in Rome, and ever since the effort for that sort of church unity by external bonds has manifested itself. S. R.

Till very lately it used to be confidently believed that a vast mound, bearing the name of Birs Nimroud, about six miles to the south-west of the modern town Hillah, on the Euphrates, and near the site of Babylon, was the remains of the Tower of Babel. It is a huge brick mound, oblong in form, measuring above 700 yards round, and rising on one side to the height of 200 feet. But in 1854 Sir Henry Rawlinson carefully examined the Birs, and deciphered an inscription which contains its history. From it he gathered that the Birs was not situated in Babylon at all, but in Borsippa ; its name was "The Stages of the Seven Spheres ;" it was dedicated to Nebo or Mercury : it was repaired by Nebuchadnezzar, whose name appears on the bricks and the cylinders at the corners ; but it was built by a former king. W. G. B.——Whatever its history, the ruin, Birs Nimroud, composed so largely of burnt brick laid in bitumen, commemorates the mode of construction peculiar to Babylonia. Indeed we can ascend almost to the date of this tower of Babel. For we have but to cross the Euphrates to the ruins of Mugheir—Ur of the Chaldees—to find in the basement of its temple this combination in its most primitive form. The burnt bricks are of a small size and inferior quality, laid in bitumen, facing a solid mass of sun-dried brick and forming a solid wall outside of it, ten feet in thickness. S. C. B.

On a fragment of a tablet found by the late Mr. Smith among the ruins of Nineveh is the story of the first erection of the tower. Though it is greatly mutilated, yet we can gather from its broken sentences the general outline of events. Between this fragment and the narrative in Genesis the points of agreement are : The sin of the people ; their uniting to build a tower ; the anger of God ; he confounds their speech ; the building is abandoned ; the people are scattered. Babylon was thus abandoned, and it remained so for a time ; but its history is again taken up in the Assyrian records, just as it is in the Bible. J. L. P.

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The counterpart to this confusion of languages, and dispersion of nations, is to be found in the history of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the communication of the gift of tongues, by means of which, what contradiction and pride had severed, was once more united in love and humility. In the kingdom of God, the whole human race is to be congregated as one flock under one shepherd. C. G. B——That was certainly a most stupendous miracle which led to the dispersion of mankind over all the countries of the world. But there was another miracle equally stupendous, and a miracle of tongues too, by which the people of all various languages were recalled to the Faith from which they had departed. By the first, God raised up barriers for the segregation of the species into distinct communities. By the second, He threw down these barriers, that the bearers of the heavenly message might range freely over the world, and gather out of all nations the family of the faithful. T. C.——In this first attempt to found a vast kingdom of this world, which God brought to naught by confounding the language of its builders and by scattering them over the face of the earth, we see a typical judgment, of which the counterpart in blessing was granted on the day of Pentecost ; when, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, another universal kingdom was to be founded, the first token of which was that gift of tongues, which pointed forward to a reunion of the nations,

when the promise would be fulfilled that they should all be gathered into the tents of Shem! A. E.

It pleased God, in His own good time and manner, to realize the presumptuous design of the Babel-builders, and to unite together in one central institution the scattered families of man. In the mediation of His blessed Son, He hath reared up a Tower whose top reaches to heaven, while its base is accessible to the heirs of sinful flesh and blood,—a Jacob's ladder, whereby the communications of prayer and praise may pass upward to Him, and those of grace, mercy, and peace, may descend to His creatures. Clustering round the base of this Tower is a city which He hath founded, and which is designed to be indeed world-embracing. The members of the community thus formed are united together by strong and efficacious bonds, although such as are invisible to the eye of sense. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of them all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all. Daily they approach a common mercy-seat, as a refuge from sin's condemning guilt. Daily they draw nigh to a common Throne of Grace, as a refuge from sin's domineering power. Daily they pursue the same pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, with the same auspices and under the same guidance. Daily God communes with them out of His living oracles, speaking to them, as their case requires, in accents of warning, encouragement, or consolation. Continually is their failing strength renewed by the bread which came down from heaven, imparted to them through a special channel ordained for its conveyance. The same hope animates, the same word guides, the same bread feeds, the same Providence directs, the same blood cleanses, the same grace quickens and consoles them. *Goulburn.*

Compare three well-known *pictures* presented by the Holy Scriptures :—

*Gen.* 11 : The human race, as one nation, speaking *one language.* They attempt to preserve this unity by building a metropolitan city, where the whole race might dwell, under one government and one chief. Their leading idea was that oneness of *nationality*, of *speech*, and of *government* would bind the whole race in the closest bonds of brotherhood. But God was left out of their thoughts. To stop the human plan and thwart sinful intention, God interfered by confounding their language, and the race was split up into fragments, which became the starting points of nations, and peoples, and kindreds and tongues ; and men became, henceforth, Barbarians, Scythians, bond, free—anything but *Brothers.*

*Acts* 2 is the companion picture. The two should be studied side by side. *That* showed how men became strangers and aliens : *this* shows how God unites them into one family. On the Day of Pentecost visible *tongues* descended upon the Church of Christ, and forthwith, being filled with the Holy Ghost, each member thereof began to speak with *foreign tongues* "the wonderful works of God." And the whole community was really cemented into one brotherhood, and had all things common. This indicated God's way of uniting them : not by all dwelling in *one city*, or kingdom, or speaking one tongue ; not by any external bond ; but by giving each individual man *His Holy Spirit.* They may speak all the languages of the earth, but their *voice* is one, the leaven is one, their communion is one ; all kindreds and tongues, nations and people, are being gathered together from the dispersion caused by sin.

*Rev.* 7 : 9, 10 is the third picture. It is a scene in heaven, where all is completed which was only signified at Pentecost. The whole family are gathered together—once separated physically by seas and continents, and morally by sin. This great family is composed of the same diversities that existed on earth. They are still *kindreds*, and *nations*, and *peoples*, and *tongues*, and yet they are united—*one* family, all speak the same praises, all sing *one* song. Ask, What has made them so? Clearly not *one* tongue, as was attempted at Babel, but it is the possession of *one* spirit, which has attuned them all, and brought them into fellowship with the Father and the Son. "The Lamb is the light thereof," and His magnetic power attracts these once-scattered units, now no longer under the centrifugal power of sin, but under the centripetal influence of the Holy Spirit. *Morgan Dix.*

# Section 36.

## SHEM TO ABRAHAM.

GENESIS 11 : 10-32.

10 THESE are the generations of Shem. Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arpach-
11 shad two years after the flood : and Shem lived after he begat Arpachshad five hundred
12 years, and begat sons and daughters. And Arpachshad lived five and thirty years, and
13 begat Shelah : and Arpachshad lived after he begat Shelah four hundred and three years,
14, 15 and begat sons and daughters. And Shelah lived thirty years, and begat Eber : and
16 Shelah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and
17 daughters. And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg : and Eber lived after
18 he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And
19 Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu : and Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred
20, 21 and nine years, and begat sons and daughters. And Reu lived two and thirty years,
22 and begat Serug : and Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and
23 begat sons and daughters. And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor : and Serug lived
24 after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Nahor lived
25 nine and twenty years, and begat Terah : and Nahor lived after he begat Terah an
26 hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. And Terah lived seventy
years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
27 Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran ; and
28 Haran begat Lot. And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of
29 his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives : the
name of Abram's wife was Sarai ; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter
30 of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. And Sarai was barren ; she
31 had no child. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's
son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife ; and they went forth with
32 them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan ; and they came unto Haran,
and dwelt there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years : and Terah
died in Haran.

The history of Noah's children divides itself into two branches ; the general peopling of the earth by the descendants of his three sons, and the particular line of the chosen family. The former subject is briefly dismissed, but with notices full of interest ; and the latter is pursued down to Abram, on whose migration to Canaan we again come in contact with the other races of men. P. S.——The CHRONOLOGICAL thread of sacred history is now connected with the GENEALOGY OF SHEM, as before the flood it had been with that of Seth. Here as before, differences of numbers occur in the Hebrew text, as compared with the LXX. and the Samaritan. K

**10.** The usual phrase, *These are the generations*, marks the beginning of the fifth document. We now enter upon a new phase of human development. The nations have gradually departed from the living God, and have fallen into polytheism and idolatry. The knowledge of the one true God is on the verge of being entirely lost. Nevertheless the promises, first to the race of Adam that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and next to the family of Noah that the Lord should be the God of Shem, were still in force. It is obvious from the latter promise that the seed of the woman is to be expected in the line of Shem. **10-26.** This passage contains the pedigree of Abram from Shem. From this it appears that the sacred writer here reverts to the second year after the flood,—a point of time long before the close of the preceding narrative. *Shem was the son of a hundred years*, or in his hundredth year, two years after the flood, and therefore in the six hundred and third year of Noah, and consequently three years after Japheth. Abram was the twentieth, inclusive, from Adam, the tenth from Shem, and the seventh from Heber. M.

We have here the third genealogical table. The 1st was given in ch. 5 from Adam to Noah ; the 2d in ch. 10, the genealogy of the three sons of Noah, the descendants of Shem being

traced down as far as Peleg. Now we have the line of Shem further carried down to Abraham, the father of the faithful, the ancestor of the promised seed. In ch. 10 no account is given of the length of the generations or of the duration of life; but here as before in ch. 5, both these are supplied. We mark at once the transition from the antediluvian to the postdiluvian duration of life. Noah lived 950 years, Shem only 600, Arpachshad, the firstborn of Shem after the deluge, only 438; when we come to Peleg, who seems to have been contemporary with the dispersion, life is still shorter; Peleg lived 239 years, Reu 239, Serug 230, Nahor 148. E. H. B.

*Table of Hebrew and Septuagint Texts.*

| | Hebrew Text. | | Septuagint. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Years before birth of Son. | Whole Life. | Years before birth of Son. | Whole Life. |
| Shem | 100 | 600 | 100 | 600 |
| Arpachshad | 35 | 438 | 135 | 535 |
| Kainan | | | 130 | 460 |
| Shelah | 30 | 433 | 130 | 460 |
| Eber | 34 | 464 | 134 | 404 |
| Peleg | 30 | 239 | 130 | 339 |
| Reu | 32 | 239 | 132 | 339 |
| Serug | 30 | 230 | 130 | 330 |
| Nahor | 29 | 148 | 179 | 304 |
| Terah | 70 | 205 | 70 | 200 |
| Abram | | | | |

On the whole, the predominant view has been to accept the Hebrew as the true text. But it is to be borne in mind that we have but one Hebrew manuscript as old as the year 580 A.D., and that we in no case seem to get back of a Masoretic revision; while the Septuagint represents a text which dates 250 years B.C. Whatever the decision as to relative correctness, the phenomenon must raise questions and doubts, as it shows somewhere the hand of the emendator.

When now we attempt to follow down this second line of early consanguinity, the Shemite, with its figures, we find ourselves at once dealing with several extremely difficult and complicated questions, on which in the present state of our knowledge no man can offer an absolute solution, *but only suggestions which look toward a solution.* These questions concern the relation of the individuals to each other in the line of succession; the length of life ascribed to them respectively; and the total duration thus indicated from the Creation to the Deluge.

Reversing the order of these questions, there meets us that of the length of time prior to the Deluge, and thereby somewhat directly the duration of man's history on the earth, involved chiefly in this period. For the length of time from the Christian era to the birth of Abraham can be reckoned without any large range of variation—perhaps 200 or 300 years; and the period from Abraham to Noah offers us two Biblical Chronologies (Hebrew and Septuagint) admitting, to some degree, possible confirmatory or corrective collation with semi-historic events. But the previous period stands alone. No figures whatever are offered from any source except the Pentateuch. While making all allowance for possible exigencies, I do not as yet see valid reason to adopt any view of the time of man's existence very greatly in excess, if not of Usher's, yet of Hale's Chronology, 5411 B.C. All definite records and distinct traditions go up to a limited distance and stop there, this side even of the date thus gained. Thus the latest and most careful authorities. Chinese investigators now find nothing solid in the antiquity of China earlier than eleven or twelve hundred B.C; we find no Iranic civilization earlier than 1500 B.C., nor Indian earlier than 1200. The Trojan epoch does not probably reach further than 1200 to 1300 B.C., nor the subjacent cities than 2000. The latest result in regard to Phœnicia gives but the sixteenth or seventeenth century B.C. Sayce and Lenormant place the beginning of Assyria about 1500 B.C, and Smith and Lenormant the beginning of Babylon 2300 B.C. In the case of Egypt one only of the prominent Egyptologists (Mariette Bey) insists on finding no contemporaneous dynasties, but makes all successive; and his estimate of 5004 years B.C. to the accession of Menes still falls within the limits of Hale's Chronology, while Poole's and Wilkinson's estimates subtract more than 2000 years from Mariette's figures. If we accept the Biblical antediluvian narrative as it stands, all eastern history is a simple and natural phenomenon, thoroughly consistent with itself and with all known facts. And in this line a very striking coincidence is mentioned, viz.: "Taking as a basis the annual increase of population in France (which has the best statistics for the past two hundred years) at $\frac{1}{212}$ a year, six persons (say Shem, Ham, and Japheth, with their wives) would increase to 1,400,000,000 in 4211 years. But in 1863, the estimated population of the earth was 1,400,000,000, and 4211 years would carry us back from that time to 2348 B.C., the common date of the Flood." S. C. B.

Christian apologists have shown unnecessary anxiety as to exactness in dates. The admitted elasticity or differences in Bible chronology should make us willing to grant a liberal margin. What specially concerns us is the *harmony*

*of histories.* While exact dates are in their own place most valuable, they are not to supersede the cumulative evidence which the recognized harmony of profane with sacred history is bringing to the side of the Christian apologists. No one can recall the perpetually recurring depreciation of the Bible through the greater part of the last half century, on the plea that its historical statements were either mythical, or, when valid, had been written out after other histories had been published, without deep thankfulness for the striking vindication of all its statements which contemporary histories have of late been giving. *W. Fraser.*

**26. Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.** Haran dies before his father, leaving behind him Lot, his son, Terah's grandchild, already a grown-up lad. The 70 years assigned to Terah must consequently be his age at the birth of Haran, his first born. Abram's birth may be inferred from chap. 12 : 4 ; according to which he was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran, where Terah died, being at the time 205 years old. Abram was 75 years old at his father's death, and consequently he was born when his father was 130 years old. Abram's name stands before that of his brothers for no other reason but because he was the heir of the promise. C. G. B.

Shem could tell Abram, with whom he was contemporary one hundred years, nearly what Lamech, his grandfather, had reported to him, and who lived also contemporary with Adam fifty years ; nay, what Methuselah had told Shem, after being contemporary with Adam 243 years. Thus it will be found that the first 2000 years of the world's history is reduced to the testimony of but two of our generations—the testimony of a grandfather, through father to the son. Even as late as the birth of Isaac there stood Shem to report and testify what Lamech and Methuselah had told him from Adam. S. R.——This genealogy here ends in Abram, the friend of God, and leads further to Christ, the promised Seed, who was the Son of Abram, and from Abram the genealogy of Christ is reckoned. Put ch. 5, 11, and Matt. 1 together, and you have such an entire genealogy of Jesus Christ as cannot be produced concerning any person in the world, out of his line and at such a distance from the fountain-head. And laying these three genealogies together, we shall find that twice ten, and thrice fourteen, generations or descents passed between the first and second Adam, making it clear concerning Christ, not only that he was the Son of Abraham, but the Son of man and the Seed of the woman. H.

**27–32.** This passage forms the commencement of the sixth document, as is indicated by the customary phrase, *These are the generations.* The sense also clearly accords with this distinction ; and it accounts for the repetition of the statement, "Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." This passage and the preceding one form the meet prelude to the history of Abram, —the one tracing his genealogy from Shem and Heber, and the other detailing his relations with the family out of which he was called. . . . God has not forsaken the fallen race. Out of Adam's three sons he selects one to be the progenitor of the seed of the woman ; out of Noah's three sons he again selects one ; and now out of Terah's three is one to be selected. Among the children of this one he will choose a second one, and among his a third one before he reaches the holy family. M.

**28. Ur of the Chaldees.** *Mugheir*, which bore the exact name of *Ur* or *Hur*, is entitled to be (at least provisionally) regarded as the city of Abram (so Professors Rawlinson, Porter, Eadie, Loftus, Ayre, etc., after Sir Henry Rawlinson). Ur or *Hur*, now *Mugheir*, or *Um-Mugheir* (= *the bitumened*, or *the mother of bitumen*), is one of the most ancient, if not *the* most ancient, of the Chaldean sites hitherto discovered. It lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, about six miles from the present course of the stream, nearly opposite the point where the EUPHRATES receives the *Shat-el-Hie* from the Tigris. It is now not less than 125 miles from the sea ; but there are grounds for believing that it was anciently a maritime town, but now inland from the rapid growth of the alluvium. The remains of buildings cover an oval space, 1000 yards long by 800 broad. The most remarkable building near the northern end of the ruins is a temple of the true Chaldean type, built in stages of bricks laid chiefly in bitumen, and bearing the name of *Urukh*, who is regarded as the earliest of the Chaldean monumental kings, B.C. 2000, or a little earlier. Ur, the capital of this monarch, retained its metropolitan character for above two centuries, and, even after it became second to Babylon, was a great city, with an especially sacred character. It is in the main a city of tombs. *Dic. B.*

The inscriptions which connect the name of Urukh with the cities of Niffar, Warka, Senkereh, and Mugheir, constantly speak of the last of these places as the city of Ur or Hur. This word appears to contain the essential part of the word *Hurki*, the moon-god, of whose wor-

ship, in early Chaldean times, this city was a principal seat. This notion is confirmed by the indirect testimony of Eupolemus, a Jewish writer of about 150 B.C., who says that Abraham was born in *Camarina*, a city of Babylonia, which some call *Uria*, *i.e.* a city of the Chaldeans. Now the word Camarina appears to be a Greek name, derived from an Arabic word, *kamar*, which means "the moon." Thus in the two words Uria and Camarina the name of the place and its meaning appear to be brought together ; and thus, if any single place is to be regarded as the site of Ur of the Chaldees, Mugheir has the strongest claim to be selected for that purpose. Mugheir was visited by the old Italian traveller Pietro della Valle, early in the seventeenth century, on his way from Basrah to Aleppo. He says that he had no idea what place he was surveying, but that the ruins consisted of large well-burnt bricks, stamped and inscribed with characters unknown to him, but which appeared to be very ancient. "I carried away," he says, "one of the bricks, and noticed that they were joined together in the building not with mortar, but with bitumen, with which these plains abound, so that the Arabs call the hill of ruins *Muqejer*, *i.e.* 'the pitchy.'" H. W. P.

The site of Ur was discovered about twenty years ago. It is marked by a number of large mounds in which were found embedded cylinders and bricks of the oldest type, showing that this was one of the earliest cities built by the Cushite Akkadians. The Chaldeans were fire-worshippers, and Ur (which signifies "fire" or "light") appears to have contained one of their chief temples, which, at a somewhat later period, was dedicated to the moon, the second great "light" of heaven. In Ur, and among the ruins of other early Chaldean cities, multitudes of bricks have been found, stamped with the name *Urukh*. This king founded many of the oldest temples in Babylonia, as his name is upon the bricks dug up from their ruins, and also upon tablets. One inscription reads : "Urukh, king of Ur, who the house of Ur built." He built the temple of the moon at Ur ; he also built the temple of the sun at Larsa (the Ellasar of Gen. 14 : 1) ; the temple of Venus at Erech ; the temples of Bel and Beltis at Nipur (Calneh) ; and the temple of Sarili at Zirgulla. These facts, while they show the all-pervading and inveterate idolatry of the ancient Chaldeans, strikingly illustrate the reason assigned by Joshua for the migration of Terah and his family from Ur. Had he remained there, he and his household would have been exposed to unceasing persecution and temptation. To have adopted the worship of the true God and renounced idolatry would have been, humanly speaking, impossible in such a country and among such a people. Their worship, as stated in the inscriptions shown on their monuments, was grossly polytheistic. J. L. P.

In Shinar idolatry, which had insensibly commenced in Armenia, and proceeded till it had almost superseded the worship of the one true God, was perfected. As the human mind never tolerates any violent or sudden change in received and well-confirmed opinions, the ancient idolatry is supposed to have originated in slow and imperceptible innovations, alterations, and perversions of the pure patriarchal religion ; till it became a strange and monstrous compound of Demonolatry, Sabianism, Materialism, Polytheism, and cruelty. G. T.——It is very remarkable that wherever men went, they forsook the pure worship of the true God, and instituted religious rites and practices of their own. The most lamentable thing about idolatry was, that when men began to give license to their fancy in fashioning their gods, they made them like themselves, with their own weaknesses, passions, and lusts. Instead of being elevated by fellowship with a Being of purest and noblest mould, the worshippers were debased by the contemplation of beings of low passions and propensities, whom it was regarded a duty to resemble. W. G. B.——Idolatry is the religion of sight in opposition to that of faith. Instead of the unseen Creator, man regarded that which was visible—the sun, the moon, the stars—as the cause and the ruler of all ; or he assigned to everything its deity, and thus had gods many and lords many ; or else he converted his heroes, real or imaginary, into gods. The worship of the heavens, the worship of nature, or the worship of man—such is heathenism and idolatry. A. E.

Abraham, the highest born of the whole Semitic stock, is described as dwelling at Ur, a large and wealthy town, the chief seaport upon the Persian Gulf, though now left far inland by the deposit of the silt brought down by the Euphrates from the highlands of Armenia. The place was originally peopled by the Accadians, a race descended from Japheth, and who are proved by the large remains of their literature to have been a wealthy, learned, and highly civilized people. The cuneiform method of writing seems to have been their invention, and clay their ordinary though not their only writing material. Papyrus was used by them at a very early date ; and so common was the use of writing, that all the ordinary transactions of

business were carefully recorded, and numerous tablets in our museums refer to matters of the most insignificant kind. R. P. S.

Ur was one of the most ancient cities of Chaldea, and at the time of Abram must have been one of the most splendid. The Cushite population on the Lower Tigris and Euphrates had already conquered the Accadians, and were mingled with them; to form in the course of time the race known as Babylonians. The city was then flourishing; the arts and sciences were cultivated; astronomers watched the heavens; poets composed hymns and epics, and patient scribes stamped, on soft clay tablets, the books which have in part come down to our day. For the ancient race which lived in these lands were, beyond most, given to writing and reading. There were libraries at Senkereh, Babylon, Borsippa, Cutha, Accad, Ur, Erech, Larsa, Nippur, Kalah Chergat, Calah, and Nineveh. *Geikie.*

The Shemitic family of languages may be divided into four groups: 1. The Southern group—Arabic, Ethiopic, etc. 2. The Aramaic group—Syriac, Chaldee, etc. 3. The Hebrew group—the Phœnician, Hebrew, etc. 4. The Assyrian and Babylonian. These languages have given us a considerable literature; they were spoken by cultivated nations of the ancient world, mediating between the great centres of primitive Turanian culture—the Euphrates and the Nile. Everything seems to indicate that they all emigrated from a common centre in the desert on the south of Babylonia, the Arabic group separating first, next the Aramaic, then the Hebrew, while the Babylonian gained ultimately the mastery of the original Accadian of Babylonia, and the Assyrian founded the great empire on the Tigris. Now the book of Genesis represents Abram as going forth from this central seat of Ur of the Chaldees, going first northward into Mesopotamia, and then emigrating to Canaan, just as we learn from other sources the Canaanites had done before him. The monuments of Ur reveal that about this time, 2000 B.C., it was the seat of a great literary development. The father of the faithful, whose origin was in that primitive seat of culture, and who lived as a chieftain of military prowess and exalted religious and moral character among the nations of Canaan, and who was received at the court of Pharaoh—that other great centre of primitive culture—on friendly terms, could not but have, to some extent at least, made himself acquainted with their literature and culture. *Briggs.*

Brought up amid such influences, Abram, if not a person of education, must have been a man of great intelligence; and his subsequent life proves that he also possessed unusual prudence and a superior judgment. When God's revelation came to him, it was to an enlightened mind. His renunciation of idolatry and his adoption of the worship of the true God, were not the result of impulse, but of an intelligent, deliberate choice, under special divine guidance. *S. Merrill.* ——No reasonable doubt can be cast upon the assertion that the difference between Abram and the Chaldees lay in his being a worshipper of one God, while they worshipped many. Nor can we find any explanation of the monotheism of Abram and his clan so simple and reasonable as that given by his possession of such histories as those contained in the earlier chapters of Genesis. R. P. S.

**28. Abram's wife was Sarai.** Abram says of Sarai, "She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother" (Gen. 20 : 12). In Hebrew phrase the granddaughter is termed a daughter; and therefore this statement might be satisfied by her being the daughter of Haran. Lot is called the brother's son and the brother of Abram (Gen. 14 : 12, 16). If Sarai be Haran's daughter, Lot is Abram's brother-in-law. This identification would also explain the introduction of Iscah into the present passage. Still the studied silence of the sacred writer in regard to the parentage of Sarai, in the present connection, tells rather in favor of her being the actual daughter of Terah by another wife, and so strictly the half-sister of Abram. For the Mosaic law afterward expressly prohibited marriage with "the daughter of a father" (Lev. 18 : 9). And the text does not state of Iscah, "This is Sarai," which would accord with the manner of the sacred writer, and is actually done in the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan.

**31. To go into the land of Canaan.** Terah was two hundred years old when he undertook the long journey to the land of Canaan; for he died at two hundred and five, when Abram was seventy-five. *They came to Haran and dwelt there.* Filial piety, no doubt, kept Abram watching over the last days of his venerable parents, who probably still hope to reach the land of his adoption. Hence they all abode in Haran for the remainder of the five years from the date of Abram's call to leave his native land. *And Terah died in Haran.* This intimates that he would have proceeded with the others to the land of Canaan if his life had been prolonged, and likewise that they did not leave Haran until his death.

We have already seen that Abram was seventy-five years of age at the death of Terah. It fol-

lows that he was born when Terah was one hundred and thirty years old, and consequently sixty years after Haran. Abram is placed first in the list of Terah's sons, simply on account of his personal pre-eminence as the father of the faithful and the ancestor of the promised seed ; he and his brother Nahor are both much younger than Haran, are married only after his death, and one of them to his grown-up daughter Milcah ; and he and his nephew Lot are meet companions in age as well as in spirit. Hence also Abram lingers in Haran, waiting to take his father with him to the land of promise, if he should revive so far as to be fit for the journey. But it was not the lot of Terah to enter the land, where he would only have been a stranger. He is removed to the better country, and by his departure contributes no doubt to deepen the faith of his son Abram, of his grandson Lot, and of his daughter-in-law Sarai. This explanation of the order of events is confirmed by the statement of Stephen : " The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in Charran.* Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Charran ; and from thence, *when his father was dead,* he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell " (Acts 7 : 2–4). M.

In Haran, charmed probably by the fertility of the country, and claiming the right of a first choice, Nahor settled. We shall find his family here in the next two generations, bearing a character suited to the motive thus suggested (G. 24 : 10 ; 27 : 43). P. S. —— Haran lies in one of the extensive plains of Mesopotamia (to the south-east of Edessa), and is specially adapted for a residence of Nomadic tribes. This accounts for the fact that the progress of the emigrants was arrested, and that Nahor remained there. K ——As far back as the Accadian epoch, the district in which Haran was built belonged to the rulers of Babylonia ; Haran was, in fact, the frontier town of the empire ; the name itself was an Accadian one signifying " the road." *Sayce.*

It is strange to think what a great part the descendants of the Chaldean shepherd, Terah, have played in the history of the world. Those of Nahor gradually formed a great kingdom which only passed away before the rising power of Syria and the fierce attacks of Edom. The twelve tribes sprung from Ishmael scattered themselves over the vast pasture and desert regions of Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, the shores of the Persian Gulf, and the east of the Jordan. The sons of Keturah, in the same way, grew into similar tribes, to whom the desert solitudes have ever since been the chosen home. The Arab race, indeed, over the world, are the posterity of Nahor and Abraham. Nor have they been without their great part on the stage of the world, for it is to an Arab that more than 200,000,000 of men look to-day as the great prophet of God, and the empire they founded in the first days of Mahometanism stretched from India to the Strait of Gibraltar, and by its culture and civilization prepared the way for the revival of Letters in Western Europe. But the supreme interest of mankind centres in the Hebrew, not in the Arab descendants of Abraham. *Geikie.*

**32. Two hundred and five years.** There was an observable gradual decrease in the years of their lives ; Shem reached to 600 years, which yet fell short of the age of the patriarchs before the flood ; the three next came short of 500 ; the three next did not reach to 300 ; after them, we read not of any that attained to 200, but Terah ; and, not many ages after this, Moses reckoned 70 or 80 to be the utmost men ordinarily arrive at : when the earth began to be replenished, men's lives began to shorten ; so that the decrease is to be imputed to the wise disposal of providence, rather than to any decay of nature. H.

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Without these first eleven chapters of Genesis we should be in the deepest darkness in reference to the origin and nature of the world and of man. In these chapters we have true light on the beginning, in the prophecies on the end ; in the former on the originating principle, in the latter on the issues of history ; in the one on the reason or cause, in the other on the purpose of the world. Without this light, a universal history and philosophy of history are impossible. Prophecy itself has its roots in these chapters. All later revelation is founded on them. *Auberlen.*

# Section 37.

## ABRAM'S CALL—BLESSING—JOURNEY TO CANAAN.

GENESIS 12 : 1–5.

1 Now the LORD said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and
2 from thy father's house, unto the land that I will shew thee : and I will make of thee a great
3 nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ; and be thou a blessing : and I will
bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse : and in thee shall all the
4 families of the earth be blessed. So Abram went, as the LORD had spoken unto him ; and Lot
went with him : and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.
5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they
had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran ; and they went forth to go into the
land of Canaan : and into the land of Canaan they came.

From this point, through forty chapters, the sacred historian leaves the history of the world to dwell on the records of three biographies. For not only is the individual life sacred to God, but those three patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—were the fathers of the chosen people. They lived peaceful and, for the most part, uneventful lives in their pastoral tents ; they were but men ; they were not sinless ; they sometimes fell into acts of meanness and deceit. But even with all their human weaknesses they were men eminently good, and their one great distinguishing feature was faith in God. It is this which, more than anything else, differentiates one life from another. We are helped to grasp the lesson by the striking way in which each one of them is silently contrasted with another who has his good things in this life—Abraham with Lot, Isaac with Ishmael, Jacob with Esau. Few lessons are more instructive than those which spring from drawing out this contrast in its details and in its results. But the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews points out to us the great lesson that it was faith which lit up their characters with every virtue and every grace ; it was like one sunbeam brightening jewels of many colors. *Farrar.*

For nearly four centuries, at the briefest computation, the new race, saved from the flood, had been left to multiply and spread and corrupt itself, without anything that we know of, better than tradition, to keep alive a pure faith or the memory of God's past dealings with mankind. Like the four hundred years in Egypt, or the period of the Judges or the interval from Malachi to John the Baptist, these centuries formed one of those longer pauses in the succession of divine communications to mankind, which have sometimes served to sharpen the ears of the few who did hearken for God's voice, as well as to accentuate that voice when it spoke again. When this interval of silence was over, two results of it were found to mark the condition of mankind. For one thing, the world was left broken up into states, tribes, and races held well apart from one another, partly by variations of dialect, and partly by blood-affinities and repulsions. In the next place, a system of nature-worship, which tended rapidly to deify the chief forces and phenomena of matter, was found to have spread itself, though under varying forms, over all lands. The former of these facts made the separation of a single tribe, for the purpose of being divinely educated in religion, a possible step ; the latter made it a needful one. The time was ripe for the interposition of Heaven, that in one sheltered and selected family at least might be unfolded an upward religious progress under supernatural impulses, to serve for a counterpoise or corrective to the downward movement everywhere else in progress. In a word, the beginnings must be made of a kingdom of God, if more and more the kingdom of fallen spirits were not to be suffered without challenge to engulf humanity. *Dykes.*

Even with the advantage on the side of righteousness gained by the terrific judgment of the Deluge, the same sinful tendencies soon began to develop themselves anew after that event ; within a few generations the miracle at Babel was necessary to confound the projects of men, combining in one vast scheme to thwart the purposes of heaven ; and even the posterity of Shem, which had some kind of general distinction conferred on it in Divine things by the prophecy of Noah, was ready to be engulfed in the swelling stream of pollution. It was neces-

sary, therefore, to adopt another course, and, for the sake of the general good of the world, to select a particular channel of blessing. This is the principle of the Divine government of which Abraham became the first living representative — individual election to special privileges, hopes, and obligations ; primarily, indeed, for the behoof of those more immediately concerned, but mainly for the benefit of others, with the express object and design that the particular in this respect might become the universal. *Gosse* ——The revelation, promise, and favor bestowed on Abraham are only vouchsafed to him in order, through him and his descendants, to pour on the whole human race the same blessing of the knowledge of God, and communion with Him. While God confines His grace to a single chosen family, He declares it is intended for all men. The first revelation to the great forefather of the Israelites shows that the Old Testament knows nothing of a Jewish national God, to whom the rest of the world is alien. *Gerl.*

It was needful that there should be a particular nation separated from the rest of the world, to receive the types and prophecies to be given of Christ, to prepare the way for his coming ; that to them might be committed the oracles of God ; and that by them the history of God's great works of creation and providence might be upheld ; and that so Christ might be born of this nation ; and that from hence the light of the gospel might shine forth to the rest of the world. These ends could not well be obtained, if God's people, through all these two thousand years, had lived intermixed with the Heathen world. So that this calling of Abraham may be looked upon as a new foundation laid for the visible church of God, in a more distinct and regular state, to be upheld and built upon this foundation from henceforward, till Christ should actually come, and then through him to be propagated to all nations. So that Abraham being the person in whom this foundation is laid, is represented in scripture as though he were the father of all the church, the father of all them that believe ; as it were a root whence the visible church thenceforward through Christ, Abraham's root and offspring, rose as a tree, distinct from all other plants ; of which tree Christ was the Branch of righteousness ; and from which tree, after Christ came, the natural branches were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted into the same tree. So that Abraham still remains the father of the church, or root of the tree, through Christ his seed. It is the same tree that flourishes from that small beginning, that was in Abraham's time, and has in these days of the gospel spread its branches over a great part of the earth, and will fill the whole earth in due time, and at the end of the world shall be transplanted from an earthly soil into the paradise of God. *Edwards.*

From the selection of *one* particular nation onward every revelation of God clusters around that nation, in order to prepare it so that ultimately the climax and the final aim of all revelation, the incarnation of God, might be attained in the midst of that people, and thence a salvation issue, adapted not only to that nation but also to all other nations. The *basis* of this history is a *covenant* into which God entered with *that* nation, and which, amid all the vicissitudes and dangers attending every human development, He preserved and directed till its final aim was attained. This covenant, whose object was a salvation which *was to be accomplished*, is designated the *Old Covenant*, in contradistinction to the *New* Covenant which God made with *all* nations, on the basis of a salvation which, in the fulness of time, *had* actually *been* accomplished. Sacred history commences with the creation of the world, while the history of the Old Covenant only begins when God entered into covenant with Abraham. The ultimate aim and the highest point of the Divine covenant activity, in all its manifestations, is the incarnation of God in Christ. The purpose of all Divine operation and co-operation in the Old Covenant is to typify it and to prepare for it. The law, the word of prophecy, the general leadings of the chosen people, and the individual leadings of its more prominent members—in fine, every miraculous interposition points toward this. The *law* is the mirror where the ideal of that Divine perfection, which, since the entrance of sin, can only be realized in the God-man, is reflected ; *prophecy* is the canvas on which the hand of the divinely-enlightened seer traces the lineaments of the God-man. The whole course of this history implies a continual descending and condescending to man on the part of the Divine Being. K.

With the Life of Abraham the Mosaic history may be said to commence : all that precedes being introductory to it. If we consult the map of the countries through which Abraham passed, and consider at the same time the probable amount of the population of the earth at this period, we shall find that Abraham, in complying with the Divine command, preached the true religion to the great majority of mankind. G. T.——No other name in all history forms so conspicuous a starting-point for the develop-

ments of after time. "Abram the Hebrew" stands at the head of many a great stream of history, like the river of Eden which parted into four. Of the leading faiths of the world, there are three which cherish his name with equal veneration; and these three are the only monotheistic faiths. To the Jew, the Moslem, and the Christian alike, the prophet Abraham forms a common ancestor. Trace these three forms of belief to their fountain-head, and they meet in the tent of that ancient confessor, exiled in the dawn of the world for his faith in the unity of God. Divided in so much else, the Englishman and the Turk, the Moor and the Arab, the Catholic and the Jew, agree in deriving their spiritual, if not also their natural, descent from that primeval "friend of God." Most literally has the promise of his new name been fulfilled. He has become a "father of many nations." *Dykes.*

The stream of sacred history first of all starts with Adam as its fountain-head; and next, Noah forms a new fountain-head for the race after the flood; so now the history takes a new departure from Abraham and continues its course onward from Abraham till inspiration closes. And accordingly it will be found that through all the remaining history Abraham is the prominent name, rather than that of Adam or of Noah. For, in the subsequent books of the Bible, while there are some seven references to Adam and eight to Noah, there are more than one hundred references made to Abraham. And these are not mere historical allusions, but the references are to Abraham as the most prominent of all the actors in the covenant of grace with the Church of God. S. R.——In some fourteen or fifteen passages of the New Testament we find his place in the unfolding of revelation distinctly referred to. In several of these passages incidents of his career are carefully discussed, in order to illustrate or confirm cardinal principles of the gospel. Our Lord himself in his controversy with the Jews, Paul in his two leading theological epistles, James, and the anonymous writer to the Hebrews, all devote long passages to the exposition of Abraham's position or of the lessons of his life. In fact, the section of the Book of Genesis in which this patriarch's career has been recorded may be called the principal as well as the earliest seed-plot of evangelical teaching. *Dykes.*

How is the fact to be explained that the three greatest religions of the world, in which the unity of the Deity forms the key-note, are of Semitic origin? Mahometanism, no doubt, is a Semitic religion, and its very core is monotheism. But did Mahomet invent monotheism? Did he invent even a new name of God? Not at all. And how is it with Christianity? Did Christ come to preach faith in a new God? Did He or His disciples invent a new name of God? No. Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, and the God whom He preached was the God of Abraham. And who is the God of Jeremiah, of Elijah, and of Moses? We answer again: The God of Abraham. Thus the faith in the One Living God, which seemed to require the admission of a monotheistic instinct, grafted in every member of the Semitic family, is traced back to one man; to him "in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed." And if from our earliest childhood we have looked upon Abraham, the Friend of God, with love and veneration, his venerable figure will assume still more majestic proportions, when we see in him the life-spring of that faith which was to unite all the nations of the earth, and the author of that blessing which was to come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. And if we are asked how this one Abraham passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer that *it was by a special divine revelation*, granted to that one man, and handed down by him to Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, to all who believe in the God of Abraham. We want to know more of that man than we do; but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure, second only to One in the whole history of the world. *Max Müller.*

**1. Now the Lord said.** Before he left Ur Stephen tells us, what also appears most likely from the history in Genesis, that God appeared to Abram "when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran." *Cook.*——**Get thee out from thy country.** Abraham is chosen to be the head of a new dispensation, as Noah was; but with this difference, that the world is not taken away this time, but only left to walk in their own ways. But, while the world is not taken away from Abraham the coming man, Abraham the coming man is taken away from the world. Abraham and his descendants are to be separated to the life of faith and hope and holiness, separated to "walk with God." We shall find that God trained him by separation; by a series of separations. This is a key-thought of Abraham's life. *Gibson.*——From thy kindred, thy father's house. It was to sunder three ties,—country, kindred, and home,—and he was to go *by faith* He is chosen as the founder of a new family, and a new order of things. *Jacobus.*

It was *grace* that honored him with the call. It

is very important to have this fully in mind if you would understand the force of Paul's reasoning from this case of Abraham to prove that "we are justified before God by faith only, and not from our own deservings" (Gal. 3 : 8). His argument is that to Abraham, while yet ungodly and idolatrous, God preached the gospel and promised the blessings of His grace. S. R.—— He was singled out from the world's inhabitants to begin a new order of things, which were to bear throughout the impress of God's special grace and almighty power ; and he must separate himself from the old things of nature, to be in his life the representative of God's holiness, as in his destiny he was to be the monument of God's power and goodness. It is this exercise of faith in Abraham which is first exhibited in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as bespeaking a mighty energy in its working. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed ; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." P. F.

**2, 3.** The promise advances in six degrees upward, until in the highest the Messias is perceptible, who was to be of the race of Abraham. "I will make of thee a great nation," both of thy bodily and spiritual seed ;—"I will bless thee," and yet he possessed not a foot of land ; —"make thy name great," and yet it behoved him to be a stranger in a strange land. Abraham's name did become great. C. G. B.——*I will bless them that b'ess thee, and curse him that curseth thee ;* this made it a kind of a league, offensive and defensive, between God and Abram. Abram heartily espoused God's cause, and here God promises to interest himself in his. He promises to be a Friend to his friends, to take kindnesses shown to him as done to Himself, and to recompense them accordingly. God will take care that none be losers, in the long run, by any service done for his people. He promises to appear against his enemies ; there were those that hated and cursed even Abram himself ; but while their causeless curses could not hurt Abram, God's righteous curse would certainly overtake and ruin them (Num. 24 : 9). This is a good reason why we should bless them that curse us, because it is enough that God *will curse them. In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed ;* this was the promise that crowned all the rest ; for it p ints at the Messiah, in whom *all the promises are yea and amen.* H.——This promise is repeated seven times. It is the third prophecy of the Messiah, and is here attached to a single person,—then to his family,– afterward to the people that descended from them, –and finally expands itself to all the nations of the earth. C. G. B.——The wealth of blessing which lay folded up in this germ took more than two thousand years to ripen into fruit. But from the very first God left it in no doubt that, when the fruit of that chosen vine should at last be ripe, it should be for all nations. In God's great plan, whatever is narrow, elective, or individual, contemplates in the long run a wider good. God is not the God of Shem only. For a time He was Shem's God in a peculiar sense, only that in the end both Japheth and Ham may partake in the blessing. God is not the God of Abraham alone ; but He blessed Abraham in an eminent degree, that at last the blessing of Abraham might come on the nations through Jesus Christ. *Dykes.*

Here are two distinct covenants or blessings : the first temporal, which respects only Abram and his family ; the second spiritual, which has regard to Christ and the whole world. And all future prophecies have regard to these two covenants. Ishmael, and Esau, and all the family of Abram, had a right to the blessings of the first ; and all the world to the blessings of the second. The Jews indeed expect, by virtue of the last, to bear rule over the whole world ; but surely this would be no great blessing to the rest of the nations of the world, whatever it might be to them. Therefore, saith Paul with respect to this promise, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," the promised seed in which all the families of the earth were to be happy. From this time a particular providence attended the people of Israel, his posterity by his sons Isaac and Jacob ; correcting, trying, punishing, redeeming them out of the hands of their enemies, until the promised seed came. *Bp. Wilson.*

The expression "all families," repeated four times, is the centre of all promises, and that round which all the others revolve. The knowledge and the love of the one, true, living God —his covenant with Him—this was the unspeakably rich blessing which Abram possessed, the source of all other benefits which he enjoyed. This blessing was through him to pass to all people. The beginning of the Great Promise which is annexed to his family declares this only with clearness—that the knowledge of God, and covenant with Him, shall one day be the possession of all nations through Abram. *Gerl.* ——Christ is the essential kernel of the promise ; and the seed of Abraham, rather than Abraham

himself, was to have the honor of blessing all the families of the earth. But in Abraham as the living root of all that was to follow, the whole and every part may be said to take its rise; and not only was Christ after the flesh of the seed of Abraham, but each believer in Christ is a son of Abraham, and the entire company of the redeemed shall have their place and their portion with Abraham in the kingdom of God. P. F.

Hitherto deliverance had been expected through *the seed of the woman;* now the circle narrows and all nations of the earth are to be blessed in *Abraham's seed.* The history which commences with Abraham continues unbroken till the judgment which Titus was called to execute against the covenant-people. The giving of the law on Mount Sinai is only a high point, although the most prominent, in the history between Abraham and Christ. It is not the commencement of a new history. True, it is called *a covenant,* but it does not differ essentially from that with Abraham. It does not stand in the same relation to the Abrahamic as the latter to the Noachic covenant. The covenant with Noah was made with all mankind; the covenant with Abraham was made with him as the ancestor of the holy people, while that on Sinai was made with the people as the seed of Abraham. K.

**4. So Abram went, as the Lord had spoken to him.** It is the Divine method and law that man should co-operate with God, and that God should act by means of men who are fitting instruments; and this law implies that those who are God's instruments possess real character of their own in correspondence with their mission. A man who throws off the chains of authority and association must be a man of extraordinary independence and strength of mind, *although* he does so in obedience to a Divine revelation. So the recipient of a new revelation must have self-reliance, otherwise he will not believe that he has received it; he will not be sure of it against the force of current opinions. Abraham comes before us as a person who lives in the future, whose mind is cast forward, beyond the immediate foreground of his own day, upon a very remote epoch in the history of the world, and fixed upon a remarkable event in the most distant horizon of time, the nature of which is vague and dimly known to him, but which is charged with momentous consequences, involving a change in the whole state of the world The revelation is made to him, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed;" he looks onward perpetually to the accomplishment of this prediction. Our Lord himself has singled out this prophetic look of Abraham as something unexampled in clearness, certainty, and far-reaching extent. "Your father Abraham saw my day and was glad." This was a revelation made to him indeed; but he is equal to the revelation, he embraces it and concurs in his whole power of mind with it. *Mozley.*

Abraham, like Paul, "confers not with flesh and blood." He instantly believes and accepts the offer. It calls him to go out, not knowing whither he went, on the simple promise of God. There were many things to try his faith. His children were to become a great nation, and yet, though now seventy-five years old, he is childless. That he felt this difficulty, his after conduct in stumbling at it shows. S. R.——The writer of the biblical narrative occupies himself in no respect with the question, *How* God had spoken to Abram. God is, for him, present and an actor in the history just as much as Abram is; the intervention of God has in his eyes nothing but what is perfectly simple and natural. The same faith animates Abram; he issues forth from Chaldea and wanders through Palestine, according to the word and under the direction of the Eternal. *Guizot.*

Abram heard and recognized God's voice; he bowed to his authority and went. This first recorded illustration of his faith in God and obedience made its impression upon future ages —as we may see in the words of Joshua (24 : 2, 3); of Nehemiah (9 : 7, 8); of Stephen (Acts 7 : 2–5); and of the writer to the Hebrews (11 : 8–10). H. C.——The Father of the Faithful "went out not knowing whither he went!" And every true descendant in the lineage of faith will but rejoice in that ignorance which urges him to cling the closer to his immortal Friend; which bids him gladly, for intimations which could but be obscure at best, substitute omniscience itself, and teaches him to cry, "Lord, I know but faintly *what* it shall be, and I ask not to know! Only assure me that Thou wilt be there." W. A. B.

God cut him off from kindred that He might draw him closer to Himself. The emigration of a godly man at God's call forces him to lean much on God, who becomes his only constant comrade and unfailing helper. It throws him back at each emergency upon the spiritual resources of faith, and trains into full maturity the graces of his religious nature. Inwardly, Abram could hardly have become the spiritual hero he was in later life, if he had not been forced to walk through the long trials of his exile with nothing but the unseen eternal God for

his "shield," and compelled to brood through homeless years over the mighty thoughts which God had uttered to his faith. *Dykes.*

Does God give "the reason why" in the case of every command? Certainly not. Where he does not give a reason he gives in reality the best reason of all. To give a promise is to show that the reason though undisclosed is all-sufficient, for in the case of the All-wise a promise is the harvest of which a reason would be but the bare seed. We can understand a promise where we could not understand a reason : the reason may be too high or too recondite for our faculties ; but a promise is practical, positive, literal, and if we have faith in the speaker we know that if the promise be so good the command which precedes it must be founded upon a reason equally valid. In reality we have nothing to do with the reasons upon which God's commands are founded. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. To have faith in *God* is to comprehend all reasons in one act. . . . Life is a discipline. Shrewd men want to know whither they are going before they set out on a journey ; but men of higher shrewdness, men of Christian faith, often go out into enterprise and difficulty without being able to see one step before them. The watchword of the noblest, truest souls is, "We walk by faith, not by sight ;" faith has a wider dominion and a more splendid future. Life is to be *spiritual;* not made up of things that can be counted and valued, but of ideas, convictions, impulses, and decisions that are Divine and imperishable. The world of faith is large, and rich, and brilliant. Those who live in it dominate over all lower worlds. J. P.

**Abram was seventy and five years old when he left Haran.** He was an hundred and seventy-five when in Canaan he closed his eyes. Through all that long interval had it been literally true of him, that "if he had been mindful of the country from whence he came out, he might have had opportunity to return." There was nothing to forbid a return. It was only the unfulfilled promise which held him fast. "This land will I give," God had said. So in "this land" he waited, and waiting died. *Dykes.*

**5.** His brother Nahor stayed behind in the plains of Haran : to become the father of twelve Arab tribes—the Nahorites—as Abraham was to be that of twelve tribes of Hebrews. But the descendants of Nahor were to wander in Edom, on the Euphrates, and over Mesopotamia ; in Bashan, and to the east of Jordan, and in Northern Arabia, almost unknown and wholly insignificant in history, while those of Abraham were to form the people of God, and to give mankind His Incarnate Son, the Saviour of the world. Nor is it unworthy of notice, in connection with their divergent futures, that Abraham's posterity alone, of all the tribes descended from Terah, abandoned the nomadic for a settled life. . . . That Abraham set forth at the head of a large body of tribesmen is evident, from his taking with him all his herds, and all the male and female slaves born in his tents, or whom he had bought in Haran ; a multitude so large in the aggregate as to enable him, a few years later, to select from among them three hundred and eighteen men trained to the soldierly defence of the camp, to pursue Chedorlaomer. *Geikie.*

After crossing the Euphrates, Abraham skirted the northern border of the great Syrian desert, passed through Damascus, and then followed the ancient road from that city to Egypt. W. H. ——The pilgrims passed through the plain of Jezreel, which, so to speak, formed a large gateway into the land, and then turned to the mountains of Ephraim. Shechem (the present Nabulus) lies in the beautiful and fruitful valley which divides Mounts Ebal and Gerizim ; to the south, the broad plain of el-Mŭkhna joins this valley. K.

**Into the land of Canaan they came.** Palestine is a small country, but it presents great varieties of soil, climate, and water supply in various districts. We have the tropical Jordan Valley and the arctic region of Upper Hermon and Lebanon. We have rich volcanic corn plains in Bashan and round Jezreel, and sandstones covered with pines and cedars, and hard limestones over which perennial streams flow between fine woods of oak and terebinth in Galilee, and yet more in Gilead. We have flat maritime plains, bounded by ever-rolling dunes, but well watered by sluggish streams from the clear springs at the mountain foot. These plains run from Carmel to Gaza, ever widening, and supporting rich harvests. We have the low chalk hills, with their luxuriant olive-yards and wells of living water, all along the eastern side of the maritime plains. Above, rise mountains 3000 to 4000 feet high, and on the north attaining to 10,000 feet. These are generally rugged and bare, but carefully terraced and partly cultivated. The vine flourishes on these higher ranges, where the frost and mist aid the strong reflection of heat from the rock to ripen the grapes. But besides these richer districts, we have the old deserts unchanged from the days of Abraham and of David ; the flat marly plateau

of Beersheba, where the nomads feed their flocks and herds as Isaac did before them ; the desolate peaks and gorges of the Jeshimon, where the dun partridge and the brown ibex roam as they did when David hid in these fastnesses from Saul, among the " rocks of the wild goats." The land is still as fertile as of old ; still well watered in certain districts ; still with a sufficient rainfall ; and when a just and stable government exists (as in the Lebanon) the country still flows with oil and wine. We learn from a study of the land and of history the desolation wrought by human means in Palestine. We see that poverty and decrease of population, the decay of roads and aqueducts, the ruin of the old cisterns, the destruction of the woods, terraces, and vineyards, are the causes of the present desolation. And experience proves that, given a just and strong government in the country, Palestine might become, like Southern Italy, a garden of the world. *Conder.*

Not by accident did that strip of Syrian territory become the theatre of sacred events, the home of the covenant people, and the seat of divine revelation. There was no other region on the earth's surface which could have answered so well. It unites, as no other does, the two indispensable conditions of central position and yet of isolation. To lie in the midst of the nations, at the focus and gathering-place of those mighty and cultured empires, whose rivalries ruled the politics, as their example led the civilization, of antiquity, yet at the same time be shut off from such contact with them as must of necessity prove injurious, seemed to be opposite requirements, very hard to be reconciled. To a curious extent they are reconciled in the land of promise. It lies at a corner where Asia, Africa, and Europe meet, or all but touch. The six ancient states of Babylon, Assyria, Media, Persia, Phœnicia, and Egypt stood round about it. The main lines of ancient traffic ran close past its border. Whenever, for purposes of war or trade, bodies of men sought to pass from the populous and powerful states of the north, whose centre lay along the Euphrates, to the populous and powerful states of the south, whose centre lay along the Nile, there was only one road by which they could travel. " Syria," says Ritter, " is bounded by a great sea of sand on the east, as by a great sea of water on the west. Across that natural barrier of sea and sand, there is but one convenient highway." Palestine is like " a bridge arching across a double sea of desert sands and of waters which the want of harbors made useless to it. It connected the Euphrates with the Nile." While thus set in the middle of all lands, it stood strangely apart from all. " No great highway," says the same authority, " led through it from nation to nation ; all went by it, over the roads which skirted it without traversing it ; and which all found their type in the sea-line which ran from the harbors of the ancient Phœnician cities to Egypt, along a shore which was almost devoid of havens." In fact, it was so isolated, that if its people chose they could dwell apart. On the west, a harborless coast ; on the north, great mountain ranges ; on the east and south, vast waterless wastes ; yet alongside it, and close by its very borders, there must pass, by fatiguing and hazardous journeys, the long caravans or laden ships which carried traffic from one civilized state to another, and the cumbrous armies by which rival empires sought to crush each other. Geographically, politically, commercially, " no country is so situated in relation to three great continents and five great bodies of water ; none unites such amazing contrasts,—perfect isolation and independence, with the ability to go out from this isolation and establish relations with all the greatest nations of antiquity." *Dykes.*

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Divine tuition, under its earlier form of mere paternal superintendence, was cut short by sin, before as yet the race had begun to be cradled. Then came that other form, the redemptive, which was at once inaugurated, and which, from then till now, has inspired and determined the whole course of human history. The Serpent-Bruiser was not yet born, was only promised, and foreshadowed by type and symbol ; but the Logos economy began to work, and, like the central wheel of some gigantic machinery, sent its motion to the farthest points. Christ began to rule the world long before he entered it through the Virgin's womb. It was he that vitalized the pious civilization of Seth. It was he that cursed the godless race of Cain, and drowned the reeking plains of Western Asia beneath the Deluge. It was he that divided the earth among the three great races that came of Noah. It was he that elected the race of Shem as the special nurse and guardian of the great religions of the world. It was he that appeared to Abraham, and evoked, through him, the Hebrew people to their stupendous destiny. From that hour, till he appeared in person to tread its mountains and its valleys, Palestine became, and remained, the central country of the globe. Diminutive in territory, embraced

by the glowing arms of the Desert on the South and East, sentinelled on the North by the rugged mountains of Lebanon, washed on the West by the Mediterranean, with scarcely a single harbor to break the line of its inhospitable coast, it lay apart from the nations, and yet in the midst of them, to be the pivot of their policy, the tempting prize of their ambition, the end for which they flourished, though they knew it not, and through its Prophets, the angel of their doom. Egypt bloomed just in time to adorn the Nomadic Hebrews with science, arts and arms. The Kingdom of Syria was strong just in time to tease, the Assyrian Empire just in time to break in pieces, for Providential ends, the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Then Babylon arose just in time to crush the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The Medo-Persian Empire, intensely hating idolatry, next rushed upon the scene just in time to bear the repentant Hebrews back to Palestine. Then Greece appeared, advancing her breast of flint to shiver the Persian lances, just in time to weave a fitting garment of language for Christian thought. Followed by iron Rome, lacing the conquered world with imperishable roads, teaching the nations law, and shutting the Temple of Janus, to await the coming of the Prince of Peace. Thus all things pointed toward this one issue. There is the unity as of a perfect drama ; and the conclusion of every healthy judgment is, that it must have been designed. Rightly, then, did Augustine, thus surveying the grand procession of races and nations, pronounce the history of the world, the history of redemption. No other philosophy of history will answer ; no other solution of the problem is valid. Blind must be the student of ancient history who cannot trace in every land the footprints, and deaf his ears who cannot hear, in every century, the footfalls, of the coming Christ.

None of those antique civilizations were native to the soils that nourished them. Rome took her light from Greece ; Greece from Egypt ; Egypt from Western Asia ; and Western Asia was where the race was twice cradled, where Adam lived and died, and where the Ark rested. Each of these civilizations, it is true, had something peculiar to itself, in obedience to other laws ; but they all proceeded, by natural descent, from one original ; and that original was a survivor of the Deluge, the bequest of an elder, perished world, and, in its last analysis, an inspiration of God himself. The only civilizations, of much historic interest, which failed to play an important part in preparing the way for Christianity, were the Hindoo and the Chinese. Why these had nothing to do, is obvious : They stood apart, outside of the line of march. But neither were *they* indigenous. They both proceeded from Western Asia, shooting eastward, as the more important historic civilizations shot westward, from the central stem. As to the ordering of these events, the fact of a general Divine superintendence is hardly to be questioned. Such adaptations indicate design ; and such design necessitates the inference of a competent designer. R. D. H.

## Section 38.

ABRAM ENCAMPS AT SHECHEM. PROMISE OF THE LAND. BETH-EL. THE SOUTH COUNTRY.

GENESIS 12 : 6–9.

6 AND Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh.
7 And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land : and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared
8 unto him. And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Ai on the east : and there he builded an altar
9 unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.

**6. Shechem.** See N. T., vol. 1, pp. 96, 98, and 100 for Sketch Maps and Illustrations. B. ——The western side of the *Plain of Shechem*, El Mŭkhna, is bounded by the abutments of two mountain ranges, running from east to west. These ranges are *Ebal* and *Gerizim*. Exactly opposite Jacob's Well is the opening between them. A mile and a half above the well,

and out of sight of the plain, is Nablous, the modern *Shechem*. Geographically and historically we are here in the central spot of the Holy Land. So exactly is Shechem in the centre between east and west, that the streams, which burst forth copiously from springs within its walls, run from the east gate down to the Jordan ; and those which dash over the pavements, at the west end of the town, find their way through the Plain of Sharon to the Mediterranean.

For distinctness and variety of detail the view from Gerizim has no superior. Once more Hermon rose before us in spotless purity far beyond and above Tabor, Gilboa, and the lesser hills of Galilee. On our right we could trace the trans-Jordanic range from the Sea of Galilee, Bashan, Gilead, down to Moab. On the left the Mediterranean formed the horizon from Carmel perhaps to Gaza ; while Joppa and Cæsarea could be distinctly recognized. The southern view was shut in by the hills of Benjamin. At our feet was spread the long plain of Mŭkhna, into which the vale of Shechem debouches, where Jacob pastured his flocks, and where there was ample space for the tents of Israel when gathered there by Joshua. All Central Palestine could be taken in at a glance. H. B. T.

*Robinson*, who entered the valley of Sychem through Mŭkhna, describes it as one of the most attractive portions of Palestine. "All at once the ground sinks down to a valley running toward the west, with a soil of rich black vegetable mould. Here a scene of luxuriant and almost unparalleled verdure bursts upon our view. The whole valley was filled with gardens of vegetables and orchards of all kinds of fruits, watered by several fountains, which burst forth in various parts and flow westward in refreshing streams. It came upon us suddenly, like a scene of fairy enchantment. We saw nothing to compare with it in all Palestine." *Such* then must have been the first view which Abram got of the land of promise. The plain (or rather the wood) of *Moreh*, where Abram settled, probably derived its name from the Canaanitish proprietor of that district. K.

A site so fair and lovely invited, like Damascus by its many waters, the earliest settlement of mankind : destined by nature to be a city, in which man, wherever he exists at all, is sure to congregate. As old as Damascus and Hebron, older than any other known city of Syria, Shechem was a city while Abram yet tarried in Chaldea. It is the artery through which all commerce between north and south must pass. The history of Shechem first dawns when Abram made his first encampment in the Land of Promise, under the *terebinth of Moreh*, at Shechem. "The Canaanite was then in the land," when the Father of the Faithful, under the shade of that tree, erected the first altar ever raised in that land to the honor of Jehovah ; and the pledge that his seed should possess it was renewed to him. H. B. T.

The Canaanite was in the land on the arrival of the first Hebrew immigrant. So open was the face of the country, that Abram found no hindrance to his pasturing extensive flocks both in the centre and in the south. There was plainly room for all. As yet we have to conceive of Abram as free to shift his black haircloth tents and spreading herds from spot to spot over the face of the country ; and free, wherever he encamped, to erect his altar and worship the God of his fathers, as Abel worshipped, with innocent blood, the first-fruits of his simple sheep. *Dykes.*

**7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram.** This is the first mention of a distinct appearance of the LORD to man. His voice is heard by Adam, and he is said to have spoken to Noah and to Abram ; but here is a visible manifestation. Was it an angel personating God? This question has been answered by many in the affirmative. Or was it a manifestation of the Son of God, a Theophany, in some measure anticipating the Incarnation? This opinion was held by the great majority of the fathers from the very first. . . . The fact, that the name *Angel of the Lord* is sometimes used of a created Angel, is not proof enough that it may not be also used of Him who is called "the Angel of the covenant ' (Mal. 3 : 1) : and the apparent identification of the Angel of God with God Himself in very many passages leads markedly to the conclusion, that God spake to man by an Angel or Messenger, and yet that that Angel or Messenger was Himself God. No man saw God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, declared him. He, who was the Word of God, the voice of God to His creatures, was yet in the beginning with God, and He was God. E. H. B.

The forms which revelation takes in patriarchal history are chiefly either that of immediate *inward communication*, when God speaks in the soul of man without employing the medium of the senses, or that of *Theophany*, when, by way of revealing Himself, He assumes human form. The latter manifestation was either *internal*, being then a *vision or a dream;* or *external*, when He appeared in bodily form. The

principal, and perhaps the only form of this second mode of Theophany, is by means of what is designated as the *Angel of the Lord*, in whom Jehovah appears and manifests Himself to the senses. This mode of manifestation occurs for the first time in patriarchal history. K.——If the end of the Divine ways is the realization of the perfect union between the God of love and man, His beloved creature, in one and the same person, the God-Man, then there could be no more natural or rational preparation in view of this aim, than those transitory visits or apparitions of God to the patriarchs. Later on, they will transform themselves into those glorious visions granted to the prophets, and will eventually end in the permanent Incarnation which the New Testament recounts. And this view of the apparitions of God in the life of the patriarchs may be applied to all the miracles of sacred history. They are all like so many steps on the way that leads from the calling of Abraham to the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. They are like the links of a chain of which these two events are the first and last circles. Break these and the chain will fall to pieces of itself. Consequently, all there is of superhuman in the Old Testament is implicitly contained in the incarnation and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is on the ground of the New Testament that the question of the supernatural in the Old must be settled. It is before the open grave of Jesus Christ that we must discuss concerning Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah. *Godet.*

**Unto thy seed will I give this land.** The Most High unfolds his counsels and promises gradually ; rewarding one degree of faith with such intimations of mercy as will beget another. He at first signified his purpose of merely *showing* to Abraham a distant land in which he was to sojourn. He now speaks of *giving* it, but not immediately to himself, but to his seed. This promise is still further amplified in chapter 15. *Bush.*——Behold, Abraham takes possession for that seed which he had not, which in nature he was not like to have ; of that land whereof he should not have one foot, wherein his seed should not be settled for almost five hundred years after : the power of faith can prevent time, and make future things present ; if we be the true sons of Abraham, we have already, while we sojourn here on earth, the possession of our land of Promise : while we seek our country, we have it. *Bp. H.*

**And there he builded an altar unto the Lord.** The first recorded act of religious worship since that of Noah on emerging from the ark—very simple in outward form and circumstance. A few stones piled up—perhaps a green sod laid upon them ; on that rude altar some produce of the earth, some firstling of the flock, offered up in sacrifice ; Abram before it, bowing in lowly adoration, calling upon the name of the Lord. W. H.

Here, at the foot of Ebal and Gerizim, in the holy heart of the land, he received from God his earliest intimation that this was the destined home of his future seed—the land in search of which he had travelled so far. Under the branches of that sacred tree, which, after looking down on the cruel and impure rites of many more generations, was still to stand, a venerable landmark in the eyes of his conquering descendants, Abram reared his first rude altar to Jehovah on the soil of Canaan. It was his response to God's word : " Unto thy seed will I give this land." It expressed both confidence and gratitude. It was his way of taking the country in possession. *Dykes.*

When God appeared to him, then and there he built an altar, with an eye to the God who appeared to him. Thus he returned God's visit, and kept up his correspondence with Heaven, as one that resolved it should not fail on his side ; thus he acknowledged with thankfulness God's kindness to him in making him that gracious visit and promise ; and thus he testified his confidence in, and dependence upon, the word which God had spoken. And wherever he had a tent, God had an altar, and that an altar sanctified by prayer. For he not only minded the ceremonial part of religion, the offering of sacrifice ; but he made conscience of the natural duty of seeking to his God and calling on his name, that spiritual sacrifice with which God is well pleased ; he preached concerning the name of the Lord, that is, he instructed his family and neighbors in the knowledge of the true God and his holy religion. Those that would approve themselves the children of faithful Abram and would inherit the blessing of Abram, must make conscience of keeping up the solemn worship of God, particularly in their families, according to the example of Abram : the way of family worship is a good old way, is no novel invention, but the ancient usage of all the saints. H.

A grand sight that was in the heart of the old heathenism—that one man against the world almost—that solitary relic of Eden memories, green yet amid the wide desolations—that altar of a pure worship like the ark of the deluge, the sole resting-place for the foot of pilgrim piety ! See that standard for the true God set up, more sublime than granite monument or obelisk.

There it stands, more than a fortress to guard that home ; more than a sanctuary to kindle a devotion ; an ever-speaking witness for God, the prophetic pledge that the world's great sacrifice was yet to be offered. . . . Surely the tent and the altar should ever be conjoined. Every household should be the sanctuary of a hallowed affection, the earthly image of the family of heaven. Religion should be there, not in mere form, but in its living spirit ; not as a mere outward ceremonial, but as an inspiring principle. *Gillett.*

Abram set up his altar along the line of his march. Blessed are they whose way is known by marks of worship. The altar is the highest seal of ownership. God will not lightly forsake his temples. This setting up of the altar shows that our spiritual life ought to be attested by outward sign and profession. Abram had the promise in his heart, yet he was not lost in religious musings and prophesyings--he built his altar and set up his testimony in the midst of his people, and made them sharers of a common worship. J. P.

**8.** From the vale of Shechem, which had been his first halting-place, Abram moved erelong to more open quarters on the hills to the south of it. The place is described as lying between Bethel and Ai. Bethel, as a name and as a town, is of course of later date. Between these two sites there lay then, as there lies now, a "high and beautiful plain," which Robinson describes as "one of the finest tracts for pasturage in the whole land." *Dykes.*

*Bethel.* The place which was afterward called *Bethel* by Jacob ; for its first name was *Luz. Beith el* literally signifies *the House of God.* A. C. ——According to *Robinson*, the ruins, now called Beitin, are the remains of ancient Bethel. They lie five geographical miles to the south of Shechem, two geographical miles north of Jerusalem. The agreement both of situation and of name affords decisive confirmation that Beitin is the ancient Bethel. K.——There is a gently sloping grassy valley, south-east of Bethel, where the patriarch's flocks may have grazed ; and we recognize the *mountain* in the little rugged hill opposite, with shapeless cairns on its top, Tell-el-Hajar, "the hill of the stones." *Ai*, destroyed by Joshua, appears to have been situated on the hill above the village of Deir Duwân, a couple of miles further to the east. When Bethel is known and examined, it is almost impossible to mistake the site of Ai ; and also that of Abram's second encampment. H. B. T.

**There he pitched his tent - and builded an altar unto the Lord.** Where Abram has a *tent*, there God must have an *altar*, as he well knows there is no safety but under the Divine protection. The house in which the worship of God is not established, cannot be considered as under the Divine protection. A. C.

By the gift or promise of One to whom all lands belong, that land was his from one end of it to the other ; in actual possession he could not call a foot of it his own. To a position so unusual as this he was required to accommodate his conduct. Until it pleased God by his providence to put him in peaceable possession of the soil, Abram had to reconcile himself to seeing it in other hands. Because he owned no territory, he built no fixed dwelling. Altars he erected, but no house. To the last he would not exchange the encampment for a "city of habitation," simply because to the last he remained, as he said, "a stranger and a sojourner" among the people of the land. *Dykes.*

**9. Going on still toward the south.** In the first verse of the next chapter we read that "he went up out of Egypt into the south." One of the recent valuable attainments of biblical geography is the recognition of the fact that the term here rendered *south* is in truth a proper name, and denotes a certain territory of irregular boundaries, stretching, southward of Palestine, from the bottom of the Dead Sea across to the Mediterranean. So when Moses sent the spies from Kadesh, he did not say (Num. 13 : 17), "Get you up southward," for that course would have taken them back to Egypt ; but, "Get you up into *the Negeb.*" *Chambers.*——The south, as being nearer the arid desert, and further removed from the drainage of the mountains, is drier and less productive than the north. The tract below Hebron, which forms the link between the hills of Judah and the desert, was known to the ancient Hebrews by a term originally derived from its dryness, *Negeb.* This was THE SOUTH country. P. S.

The entire *southern half of Palestine Proper*, west of the Jordan, was from a very early period divided into four main regions. 1st. The largest and most familiarly known was the HILL COUNTRY ; the elevated district or plateau stretching eastward to the WILDERNESS bordering the Dead Sea, and westward to the SHEFELAH, or lowland on the Mediterranean Sea. It includes Hebron and Jerusalem. 2d. The LOWLAND or SHEFELAH, a broad strip between the central highlands and the Mediterranean. 3d. The smallest is the WILDERNESS, including the

slopes and the base of the cliffs on the west shore of the Dead Sea. And 4th. That which is of most moment in the Patriarchal History, THE SOUTH, *i.e.* the NEGEB, or SOUTH COUNTRY. This comprises "the undulating pasture country, which intervened between the HILL COUNTRY and the deserts which encompass the lower part of Palestine." In this South Country, chiefly at Beersheba and in its wide vicinage, Abraham and Isaac lived for many years. B.

In passing from the "south country" of Judah to the "hill country" marked indeed was the change, from easy smooth tracks over gently rolling downs to rocky slippery paths, up and down narrow valleys, between naked rugged hills full of caves, dreary and now (in winter) barren. There is a wonderful reality in many of these apparently trifling expressions of Scripture, which day by day our journey brings home to the mind—"the wilderness," "the south country," "the hill country," all in Judah, yet each so distinct, so characteristic in every feature. H. B. T.

# Section 39.

## SOJOURN IN EGYPT.

GENESIS 12 : 10–20.

10 AND there was a famine in the land : and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there ;
11 for the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter
into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman
12 to look upon : and it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall
13 say, This is his wife : and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee,
thou art my sister : that it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live be-
14 cause of thee. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians
15 beheld the woman that she was very fair. And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised
16 her to Pharaoh : and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated Abram
well for her sake : and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and menservants, and maid-
17 servants, and she-asses, and camels. And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great
18 plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this
19 that thou hast done unto me ? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife ? Why saidst
thou, She is my sister ? so that I took her to be my wife : now therefore behold thy wife, take
20 her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh gave men charge concerning him : and they brought him
on the way, and his wife, and all that he had.

**10. Famine in the land.** Soon after Abram entered Canaan, the land, for the sake of which he had forsaken fertile Mesopotamia, became unable to sustain his household, or to feed the comparatively small flocks which at that time composed his fortune. In this first serious trial, the new emigrant does not appear to have either asked or received counsel from Heaven. *Dykes.*

**Went into Egypt.** Egypt being watered by the Nile, which we now know to be fed by immense lakes that drain the vast mountain regions of the equator, often had plentiful harvests, when Syria, which was dependent upon the uncertain rains, was suffering from famine. This contrast between these two neighboring countries often comes out in the sacred narratives. J. P. T.——In Egypt, the fertility of the loamy soil depends on the annual rise of the Nile, which is fed by the rains of far-distant mountain ranges. Hence, when the land of Canaan was wasted by drought and consequent famine, Egypt was generally so productive as to be the granary of the neighboring countries. As Canaan was the brother of Mizraim, the intercourse between the two countries in which they dwelt was natural and frequent. Dry seasons and dearth of provisions seem to have been of frequent occurrence in the land of Canaan. M.

**11. Was come near to enter Egypt.** When he passed the well-guarded frontier wall, a new and strange world would be around him. The vast pyramids were already ancient, for at

least eight dynasties had passed away since the first had been built. Populous colonies of Semitic peoples had brought the north of the Delta into high cultivation, and filled it with busy commerce, while to the south of them the whole valley of the Nile had been united under one sceptre, and the country covered with towns, cities and villages, the former adorned by great temples and palaces, of which the ruins still excite wonder. *Geikie.*

Abram's visit to Lower Egypt is the first in a long series of similar incidents in the annals of his race, of which the last was the escape thither of his divine descendant, the persecuted Infant. What a stretch of time lay between these two flights! How many centuries separate us even from the later of the two! Yet across all these millenniums lies this land of mystery and superstition, like a link to bind history together. Egypt is the key to the politics of the East to-day, just as it was four thousand years ago. It was already the foremost state in the world. Peopled by the same race which in Chaldea had made such early advances in arts and polity, it already possessed a venerable history. It had sent out its colonies to the north and to the east. It was ruled by a semi-deified monarch, whose sway reposed on a compact and mighty priesthood. Its religion was a low and superstitious nature-worship, addicted to magic, and only redeemed from corruption by the clearness with which it proclaimed two great moral doctrines,—immortality, and a rigorous distribution of rewards and punishments in a future life. *Dykes.*

When Abram went down into Egypt the empire was already very old. Its history begins with Menes, who united the independent states of the Nile valley into a single kingdom, and established his capital at Memphis. The first six dynasties of kings represent what is called the Old Empire. It was under the monarchs of the fourth dynasty that the pyramids of Gizeh were built; and at no time during its later history did the art and culture of Egypt reach again so high a level as it did under the Old Empire. With the close of the sixth dynasty came a period of disaster and decline. When Egypt again emerged into the light of history it was under the warrior princes of the twelfth dynasty. The capital had been shifted to the new city of Thebes in the south; a new god, Amun, presided over the Egyptian deities, and the ruling class itself differed in blood and features from the men of the Old Empire. Henceforth Egyptian art was characterized by a stiff conventionality wholly unlike the freedom and vigor of the art of the early dynasties; the government became more autocratic; and the obelisk took the place of the pyramid in architecture. But the Middle Empire, as it has been termed, did not last long. Semitic invaders from Canaan and Arabia overran the country, and established their seat at Zoan or Tanis. For 511 years they held the Egyptians in bondage, though the native princes, who had taken refuge in the south, gradually acquired more and more power, until at last, under the leadership of Aahmes or Amosis, the founder of the eighteenth dynasty, they succeeded in driving the hated foreigners out. These foreigners are known to history as the Hyksos or Shepherds, Hyksos being the Egyptian *hik shasu*, "prince of the Shasu," or "Beduins." The name which they bear upon the monuments is Menti. It must have been while the Hyksos monarchs were holding their court at Zoan that Abram entered the land. He found there men of Semitic blood, like himself, and speaking a Semitic language. A welcome was assured him, and he had no need of an interpreter. But the Hyksos kings had already begun to assume Egyptian state and to adopt Egyptian customs. In place of the Semitic *shalat*, "ruler," the title by which their first leaders had been known, they had borrowed the Egyptian title of Pharaoh. Pharaoh appears on the monuments as *pir-aa*, "great house," the palace in which the king lived being used to denote the king himself, just as in our own time the "porte" or gate of the palace has become synonymous with the Turkish Sultan. *Sayce.*

**13.** Abram "was a man of like passions with us," and of like weaknesses. When God spoke to him he believed, and when he believed then he obeyed. But God had said nothing as yet to him about Sarai; and, in the absence of any special direction, he seems to have taken the matter into his own hands, after the manner of those times and countries. A. E.——But what a change is this! hitherto hath Sarah been Abram's wife, now Egypt hath made her his sister: fear hath turned him from a husband to a brother; no strength of faith can exclude some doubtings: God hath said, "I will make thee a great nation;" Abram says, "The Egyptians will kill me:" he, that lived by his faith, yet shrinketh and sinneth. How vainly shall we hope to believe without fear, and to live without infirmities! *Bp. H*

His faith wavers, because he looks to his wife, to Egypt, and to himself, and not to God alone. He fears and trembles for the *Egyptians*, who, as the event shows, were quite capable of doing

what he apprehends at their hands ; and so he persuades Sarai to tell a lie. Sarai was in point of fact his half-sister, as appears from chap. 20 : 12. C. G. B.——The equivocation is certainly not to be justified, either on this or on the future occasion on which it was again resorted to ; for though it contained a half truth, this was so employed as to render "the half truth a whole lie." Both circumstances—his repairing to Egypt, and when there betaking to such a worldly expedient for safety—betray the imperfection of his faith, which, while strong enough to set him on this new course of separation from the world and devotedness to God, still wanted clearness of discernment and implicitness of trust sufficient to meet the unexpected difficulties that so early presented themselves in the way. The first failure stood in his seeking relief from the emergency that arose by withdrawing, without the divine sanction, to another country than that into which he had been conducted by the special providence of God. Instead of looking up for direction and support, he betook to worldly shifts and expedients, and thus became entangled in difficulties, out of which the immediate interposition of God alone could have rescued him. In this way, however, the result proved beneficial. Abram was made to feel, in the first instance, that his backsliding had reproved him ; and then the merciful interposition of Heaven, rebuking even a king for his sake, taught him the lesson, that with the God of heaven upon his side, he had no need to be afraid for the outward evils that might beset him in his course. He had but to look up in faith, and get the direction or support that he needed. P. F.

**15. Princes of Pharaoh.** Pharaoh was, from the earliest times to which the monuments go back, supported by powerful nobles, or "princes," who were hereditary landed proprietors of great wealth.——**Saw her and praised her to Pharaoh.** A scene in a tomb at Beni Hassan clearly shows that, under the Old Empire, foreigners on their arrival in the country, especially if they came with a train of attendants, as Abraham would, were received at the frontier by the governor of the province, whose secretary took down in writing their number, and probably their description, doubtless for the purpose of forwarding a "report" to the court. Reports of this character, belonging to later times, have been found, and are among the most interesting of the ancient documents. It was regarded as especially important to apprise the monarch of all that happened upon his north-eastern frontier, where Egypt abutted upon tribes of some considerable strength, whose proceedings had to be watched with care. G. R.

**Taken into Pharaoh's house.** The inadequacy of Abram's expedient appears in the issue, which is different from what he expected. Sarai is admired for her beauty, and, being professedly single, is selected as a wife for Pharaoh ; while Abram, as her brother, is munificently entertained and rewarded. Sarai was sixty-five years of age (Gen. 17 : 17) at the time when Abram describes her as a woman fair to look upon. But we are to remember that Sarai's age corresponds with twenty-five or thirty years in modern times, as she was at this time not half the age to which men were then wont to live ; that she had no family or other hardship to bring on premature decay ; and that the women of Egypt were far from being distinguished for regularity of feature or freshness of complexion. M.

There is no occasion to deny, as certain apologists have unwisely done, the guilt of the patriarch's cowardice and falsehood. It was dictated by such a timorous concern for his personal safety as implied distrust in the protection of God. It did a cruel wrong to his wife, for it exposed her to the most serious of all hazards. *Dykes.*

Abram came forth from a land of idolaters. He was surrounded by idolaters in Canaan, and by idolaters in Egypt, and, we may add, was himself born of idolatrous parents. And wherever idolatry abounds falsehood abounds. *Alf.*——As the minister of God, Abram is great and noble ; as the "architect of his own fortune," he is cowardly, selfish, and false. In our own life we know what it is to have great faith and great unbelief. Abram went out at God's binding, cheerfully encountering all the trials of pilgrimage in unknown places, yet he cannot trust God to take care of his wife. How little are the greatest men ! Where there was great grace there should have been great courage. We are not to qualify the disgrace by talking about spots on the sun ; we are to learn by the failures of other men that our own life will be called to trials which will need higher strength than merely human power. J. P.

The record here is a signal instance of the fidelity of this historian, and of how marvellously unlike all other biographies are these accounts of great men in the Scriptures, in never either holding back or apologizing for the discreditable acts of their lives. This Abraham—he of the exalted character, and the hero of the faith ; he who, at the simple call and promise

of God, had forsaken home and friends and country—is now described as capable of falling through unbelief. Consulting his own wisdom, now under the pressure of famine, instead of continuing to rely upon God, he places himself in the way of strong temptation, and falls. The hero becomes cowardly ; the man of high integrity begins to scheme and prevaricate, till at last he stands disgraced under the rebuke of a heathen king! So we shall find throughout the record this same faithfulness of history in recording the faults of good men. And it is a further striking fact that the faults committed stand in most utter contrast with the prominent virtues by which those who fell were distinguished. It was the "*faithful* Abraham" who lost his confidence in God. It was the *meek* Moses who fell under the trial of his temper and "spoke unadvisedly with his lips." It was the *gentle*, amiable "disciple whom Jesus loved" who received the rebuke of his bad spirit for desiring to call down fire from Heaven on the Samaritans. It was the *bold* Peter who played the coward under the questioning of a servant maid, and with others denied his Master. These records seemed designed to stain the pride of all human glory, and teach men to "glory only in the Lord." And they admonish us to watch the points in which there is least apparent danger, and to "take heed how we stand lest we fall." The prime fault and folly of Abram in this instance consisted in not waiting for the Divine direction in leaving the land of promise, and, of course, in not committing himself to the care of the Lord Jehovah, but trusting to his own devices after he had gotten into danger. Just here is the prime cause of the follies and faults of all good men who fall. Under the pressure of some imminent danger, for which they forget that God has provided, or under the allurement of temptation or the impulses of passion, forgetting God they undertake to be their own directors and guides, and fall. S. R.

Deceit, in order to gain a point or to avert a disaster, is to this day an inveterate habit with most Orientals ; and in the best times of Israel, men otherwise of lofty character are found succumbing to this dastardly vice. The tendency evidently lay deep in the race from its first appearance. God did not select this race to be the medium of His revelations to mankind because they were by nature more noble or more generous than surrounding nations. With strong religious instincts, indeed, they were certainly endowed,—with a faculty for apprehending and surrendering themselves to the voice of the Eternal. Of this their great progenitor was the typical instance ; and the characteristic descended to the race. But of those lofty virtues which actually came to bloom on Hebrew soil, the greater part were the fruit of Heaven's culture rather than of indigenous goodness. They were products, not of nature, but of grace. *Dykes.*——The character of the patriarchs is represented in Scripture with undisguised truthfulness. We see in them the examples of men who sinned indeed, but struggled against sin, conquered, and grew in holiness. We see men who now and then succumbed under temptation, but in the end overcame, and were in truth men of God. *Gerl.*

**18.** Abram for his insincerity must bear in silence, and to his deep humiliation, the just reproaches of Pharaoh. God also shows him his iniquity by the injurious consequences which his attempt at deception entailed. C. G. B.—— In this matter Pharaoh was a greater, a nobler man than Abram. Natural nobleness ought never to be underrated. Why begrudge to the heathen a nobleness which was as surely of God as our own Christian excellence? There are men to-day who make no profession of Christian faith : whose honor, straightforwardness, and generosity would put to shame many who claim a good standing in the Church. Yet it is not because of Christianity, but for the *want of it*, that professors are humbled before men of the world ; and it must be added, that men of natural elevation of temper and sentiment would attain a still intenser lustre by the possession of that life in Jesus Christ, without which all other life is either artificial or incomplete. Natural openness and honorableness of disposition must not be valued as a substitute for the renewed life which is wrought in men by God the Holy Ghost. J. P.

**19, 20.** To him who follows God fully in simplicity of heart, everything must ultimately succeed. Had Abram and Sarai simply passed for *what they were*, they had incurred no danger. Neither Pharaoh nor his courtiers would have noticed the woman, had she appeared to be the *wife* of the *stranger* that came to sojourn in their land. The issue sufficiently proves this. A. C. ——It deserves to be noticed, that throughout the history of the chosen race, Egypt was to them the scene of spiritual danger, of covetousness and love of riches, of worldly security, of temptation to rest on an arm of flesh, on man's own understanding, and not on God only. All this appears from the very first, in Abram's sojourn there, Sarai's danger, their departure full of wealth and prosperity. E. H. B.

The Bible is remarkable for its candor and fidelity in dealing with the characters of good men. Their frailties are made as prominent as their virtues, and they appear in all respects completely human. This is one token of the Divine Mind in the book ; for God knows what is in man, and God is always true. It is never profitable, as it can never be justifiable, to swerve from the truth. The attempt to deceive others degrades our own moral sense, and is likely at some time to lead to exposure, and react to our injury. It is a true proverb, that one lie leads to another ; and by and by the deceiver becomes so involved in the meshes of his own falsehoods, that he cannot extricate himself, and must stand convicted of his shame. And, when one has lost the confidence of others in his word, it is very hard to regain it. There can be no sterling character where truth is wanting. J. P. T.——Though the wicked dishonor Him by their flagitious lives, yet let not His own children dishonor Him. Sins in you are worse than in others. A fault in a stranger is not so much taken notice of as a fault in a child. A spot in a black cloth is not so much observed, but a spot in scarlet every one's eye is upon it. A sin in the wicked is not so much wondered at, it is a spot in black ; but a sin in a child of God, here is a spot in scarlet ; this is more visible, and brings an odium and dishonor upon the gospel. *T. Watson.*

There is yet another lesson here, the lesson of Divine forbearance with human infirmity. God did not cast off Abram, or send him back to Ur of the Chaldees—a man disgraced and condemned. God forbid that we should make any excuse for sin ; yet there are sins that come out of weakness rather than out of love of sin for its own sake. Abram's sin arose rather from weakness than depravity. A great fear seized him, and for the time being he foolishly took his affairs into his own hands. "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone" at Abram ! It was something after all, standing between Babylonian and Egyptian idolatry—colossal and splendid—to say, There is but one God and I put my faith in him ! It was a new voice in the earth. It was the first note of Christian civilization. Now it is common to avow this creed, but it went for something when a Chaldean shepherd declared it amidst polytheistic and sumptuous idolatries. When we say Abram sinned, we ought also to say that Abram was the friend of God ; and if we hide ourselves under the plea of his weakness, we ought also to strive after the holiness and sublimity of his faith. J. P.

Recent explorations in Egypt, conducted mainly by Brugsch, Mariette, and Chabas, and those in Palestine, undertaken by English and American scholars, are no less interesting and important than the Assyrian researches. They illustrate every book in the Bible. Evidences of its historic accuracy are impressed on the ruins of Palestine, they are written on the tombs and temples of Egypt, and they are buried deep on sculptured stones and clay tablets, beneath the scathed mounds of Babylonia and Assyria. The touch of infidelity cannot obliterate them. J. L. P.

The learned Egyptologists of our time are laboring with enthusiasm to bring to light the records in papyri, in painting and in stone, of that ancient civilization. How comes it that this single record by Moses has been the only survivor as a living history in the hands of all men, while all these contemporary records of the same civilization have lain buried for three thousand years, to have a resurrection at last in this nineteenth century as witnesses to attest his accuracy and fidelity as a historian ? Is it after all a weak superstition of ours when we claim not only that the book is God-inspired, but that the providence of God has singularly watched over a book which alone of all the learned writings of that era survived the wreck of civilization, and passed on down through ages unscathed for over three thousand years ? S. R.

### Explorations in Egypt and Assyria.

Through Young, Champollion, and Lepsius three systems of writing, and the changing dialects of thousands of years, have been turned from dumb monuments to speaking voices, just as through Grotefend and Birnouf and Rawlinson a half-dozen kinds of cuneiform texts, and as many separate languages, have been rescued from forgotten tombs. *F. Brown* (*New Princeton Rev., Nov.*, 1886).

It is now more than forty years since Champollion, the younger, astounded the learned world by the publication of the results of his studies of Egyptian antiquities, first brought to light by the expedition of Napoleon into Egypt and removed to the royal museum in Paris, and subsequently explored on the ground by himself as the head of a learned commission, sent by the French and Tuscan Governments to Egypt, in 1828. After his death in 1832, among his scholars the subject was prosecuted with zeal : and Roselini, professor of Oriental languages and antiquities at Pisa, who had gone in 1829 with Champollion, as the representative

of Tuscany, at the request of his great associate, brought out the results of their joint investigations in a volume entitled "The Monuments of Egypt and of Nubia, interpreted and illustrated—consisting of a series of treatises on the history and civil institutions of the Pharaoh dynasties, and the languages, civil history and arts of the Nile." These investigations were subsequently followed up with great zeal by several British explorers and students —among them Dr. Young, who shares with Champollion the honor of having first indicated the right method of deciphering the hieroglyphic language, and Sir Gardner Wilkinson, a man of singular erudition and of great energy, regulated by modesty and good judgment, who published about 1841, in six volumes, the "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, including their private life, government, laws, arts, manufactures, religion and early history." In 1842 Dr. Lepsius was sent to Egypt also by the Prussian Government, in connection with other learned men, and carried on the investigations so auspiciously begun with great energy and success. Among the results of these investigations it is reported by these learned men that they have found "paintings numerous and beautiful beyond description, as fresh and perfect as if finished only yesterday." And these pictures, with multitudes of hieroglyphic records, thus disentombed, after lying buried near three thousand years, thus arise in this age of scepticism and rationalism to attest the authenticity of what Moses wrote three thousand years ago, and the evident accordance of his accounts of those ancient civilizations as a contemporary with them.

The marvellous discoveries in Egypt aroused general interest in the subject of those ancient civilizations, and soon expeditions were undertaken to explore the ruins on the Euphrates and Tigris, the region known anciently as Mesopotamia—"between the rivers"—because lying between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Bear in mind, here, the geographical facts that along the eastern side of the continent of Africa, nearly parallel with the Red Sea, comes the Nile from the far south, emptying into the Mediterranean about latitude 31 degrees and longitude 31 degrees, while some 15 degrees to the eastward comes down from Armenia in the north, the original seat of Noah's family, and empties into the Persian gulf at about the same latitude the Euphrates, receiving the Tigris as a tributary near its mouth. Thus the first great empires of the earth were founded in the valleys through which ran the Euphrates and the Nile, the Assyrian and Chaldean empires north of latitude 30 degrees on the Euphrates and the empire of Egypt south 30 degrees on the Nile.

After the discoveries on the Nile, scientific exploration directed its efforts to the eastern seat of ancient empire on the Euphrates of the Tigris. The mountain-like mounds that rose from the plains of Shinar or Babylonia were excavated, and on every hand were found sculptures, basso-relievos, impressions upon bricks, the ruins of ancient buildings, and innumerable inscriptions in singular wedge-shaped letters, in this respect differing from the "hieroglyphics" or pictured words of the Egyptian inscriptions. By the persevering studies of skilful Orientalists the key has been found to the reading of these inscriptions, and thus the records of these ancient civilizations of Babylonia and Chaldea, after a sleep of near three thousand years, have had a resurrection to furnish their testimony also to the entire trustworthiness of "Moses and the prophets." As the result of these remarkable modern discoveries, we are brought face to face with civilizations of the era of Abraham, of which for 3000 years the world has had but little conception, very much as we are brought face to face with the Roman civilization of the era of the Apostle Paul by the study of the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Among the general logical results of these discoveries is, first, an entire overthrow of the theorists who would have all civilization to be simply the last highest result of a series of developments from society in a state of savagery; and, second, a sad lesson to the materialism of our times which boasts of the marvellous advance of men toward the perfection of humanity through the advancing power of man over the powers of material nature. For "it will be shown," says Layard, "that in Assyria, as in Egypt, the arts do not appear to have advanced after the construction of the earliest edifices with which we are acquainted, but rather to have declined. The most ancient sculptures we possess are the most correct and severe in form and show the highest degree of taste in the details." I cite a paragraph from Rawlinson both as confirmatory of Layard, and as showing the coincidence between the picture of Abraham in Egypt, and the disentombed pictures of the ancient Egyptian civilization, in the time of the "Pharaohs of the Pyramid period," which I take to be contemporary with Abraham or nearly so. "The scenes depicted in the sculptured tombs of this epoch show that the Egyptians had already the same habits and arts as in after times.

We see no primitive mode of life ; no barbarous customs ; but the same fowling and fishing scenes ; the rearing of cattle and wild animals of the desert ; the scribes using the same kind of reed for writing on papyrus the inventory of the estate to be presented to the owner ; the same mode of entertaining ; the same music and dancing ; the same trades, as *glass-blowers*, cabinet-makers, and others. Thus no signs are found on the earliest monuments of a progress from infancy to the more advanced stages of art."

Furthermore, there are several facts, either expressly stated or implied, whereby we are able to compare this sacred history with what we may gather from profane sources. 1. That Egypt was already under an established government, having a king and princes who acted as the king's subordinates, three thousand eight hundred years ago. This fact is confirmed by the fact that Herodotus, Diodorus, and other Greek historians all agree in giving to the Egyptian civilization an antiquity beyond that of any other people, and modern explorers justify that ancient judgment. 2. Egypt was the granary to which surrounding tribes resorted for food in times of scarcity, because its agriculture was not dependent upon the rains of the clouds as in other countries. This fact is universally attested by history from that day to the present. 3. The name of the monarch was one that to Semitic ears sounded as "Pha-ra-oh." And the modern hieroglyphic research has pointed out how this name would readily be taken from the Egyptian "Per-a-o," the "great house," which was the regular title of the Egyptian kings. 4. The catalogue of Abram's wealth in the sacred record is peculiar. He had, generally, "cattle, gold and silver," and specifically, "sheep and oxen and he-asses, menservants, maidservants, and she-asses and camels." Not only do ancient profane writers describe sheep and asses as existing in Egypt, but the monuments represent them as common. For there sheep appear in great numbers. So both he-asses and she-asses, the former also as sculptured as used for riding, and the latter as beasts of burden. Wilkinson describes one monumental picture in which appear 760 asses. But what is most striking in this catalogue is the fact that it mentions slaves—menservants and maidservants — at that early age. Yet, says Taylor, "We find from the monuments that domestic slavery was established in Egypt from the earliest ages, and the mistress of the mansion is very rigid in enforcing her authority. We see these unfortunate beings trembling and cringing before their superiors, sometimes threatened with a formidable whip wielded by the lady of the mansion herself." "Most of them," says Wilkinson, "appear to have been foreigners, either taken in war or brought to Egypt to be sold as slaves." Thus, then, this history conforms in a very remarkable manner with the testimony from profane records, and thereby proves itself to be no poetic picture, but authentic history. S. R.

# Section 40.

## RETURN TO BETHEL. LOT'S CHOICE. RENEWAL OF PROMISE. REMOVAL TO HEBRON.

GENESIS 13 : 1–18.

1 AND Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him,
2 into the South. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on
3 his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the
4 beginning, between Beth-el and Ai ; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at
5 the first : and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. And Lot also, which went with
6 Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they
might dwell together : for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.
7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's
8 cattle : and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto
Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and
9 thy herdmen ; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I
pray thee, from me : if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right ; or if *thou take*

10 the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the
Plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and
11 Gomorrah, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou goest unto Zoar. So
Lot chose him all the Plain of Jordan ; and Lot journeyed east : and they separated them-
12 selves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the
13 cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked
14 and sinners against the LORD exceedingly. And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot
was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art,
15 northward and southward and eastward and westward : for all the land which thou seest, to
16 thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the
earth : so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be num-
17 bered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it ; for unto
18 thee will I give it. And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre,
which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

**1.** The length of Abram's residence in Egypt cannot be determined. He returned to his highland camping ground near Bethel a much more extensive sheep-master than he left it. *Dykes.*——**And Lot with him.** Lot is not mentioned in the descent into Egypt, because no part of the narrative there concerns him. On the return to Canaan he becomes a principal actor. E. H. B.——**Into the South.** Not southward ; for Canaan was north of Egypt ; but into the southern part of Canaan. This part of the land is called the South (Josh. 10 : 40), and the South country (Josh. 11 : 16). *Bp. Kidder.* Hebrew, *The Negeb.* B.

**2. Rich in cattle.** In Egypt, being a rich country, his exchanging his cattle might be more advantageous to him. For which reason, perhaps, his being rich in silver and gold is mentioned immediately after his return from thence. *Harmer.* —— **In silver and in gold.** Egypt seems to have abounded in gold from the earliest times, earlier perhaps than in silver. The gold mines of Ethiopia have within a few years been brought to light in the Bisháree desert. S. C. B.

Abram increased in riches, but never suffered his affections to fasten on these as his supreme good. He knew how to receive that degree of enjoyment they were designed to afford, without sensuality and without being insensible to God as the giver. *R. Hall.*—— Abram, it is expressly said, was rich ; but his riches did not interfere with his growth as a saint. The Gospel, while it cautions against the danger and the deceitfulness of riches, gives no countenance to the current absurdity that the rich man must go to hell because he is rich, and the poor man to heaven because he is poor. The apostle does not say that money, but the *love* of money, is a root of all evil ; and the love of money may be, and often is, a perfect idolatry in the heart of the poor who indulge in cant about the rich. The Word indeed declares, "How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom." And "They that will be rich fall into a snare and drown their souls in perdition." But the snare is as near many who are panting to be rich as to those who have attained riches. S. R.——Riches not only afford *matter* for contention and are the things most commonly striven about, but they also stir up *a spirit of contention*, by making people proud and covetous. *Mine* and *Thine* are the great make-bates of the world. Wants and wanderings could not separate between Abram and Lot ; but riches did it. H.

**5.** The patriarchs were in the habit of encamping on the same spot for years together. To some extent at least, they cultivated the soil. They certainly aimed at amassing vast flocks of the smaller cattle ; and with the inhabitants of adjacent walled towns they cultivated terms of friendship. All these things indicated their peaceful, industrious character.

**8, 9.** As the older man and leader of the expedition, Abram might not unfairly have selected for his own use the richest pasture-ground. But this would have ill become his nobler tempter. *Dykes.*

**And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife.** It was most unseemly that this strife should arise before the heathen. Now Abram's noble character shines out. *Tomkins.*——He who has the promises can well afford to yield a point of difference for the holy sake of peace. And he it is who is the gainer by all he seems to concede. "The meek (and only they) inherit the earth." Abram appeals to their brotherly relations against any strife between themselves or their herdsmen. *Jacobus.*——He gave his nephew the full choice. He was the head ; yea, the whole land was given to him by the promise. But in his magnanimity he said to Lot, "Let there be no strife. Is not the

*whole* land before thee?" *Tomkins.*——Abram was older than Lot, and richer than Lot, and yet he spoke with the meekness of great strength and ripe wisdom. His words would make a beautiful motto to-day for the kitchen, for the parlor, for the factory, for the Church! Brave Abram! we say as we read his words. He walked by faith and not by sight. Certainly his foot slipped in Egypt, but he is strong now, and he looks every inch a king as he stoops before Lot. It is beautiful to see strength stoop to weakness, but a very hard thing for strength to do. J. P.

The earliest on record this of those family quarrels about rights of property by which multitudes of human households have been so miserably dislocated. With what admirable discretion and good temper does Abram deal with it. What a bright constellation of the virtues—prudence, meekness, forbearance, unselfishness, peace-lovingness, brotherly kindness, unbounded generosity—shine forth in the magnanimous proposal, all the more remarkable because of the age of the world in which it appears! In speculative ideas, gifted men have often preceded their own age by centuries—in moral sentiments such precedence has been rare. Yet here is Abram, centuries before Christ, "walking in the moral atmosphere of the Sermon on the Mount," by one act winning at least three of the beatitudes. W. H.

This beautiful sketch, simply as an exhibition of magnanimity and generosity, has well excited the admiration of the world. But it has a most practical value as illustrating certain great principles of Christian conduct, applicable to the affairs of the Church as a body, and great lessons for the instruction of the individual Christian, to which there is need of special attention at this day. The substance of the argument against any strife among the people of God is here very forcibly put. First, there should be no strifes because we are brethren. It is against that beautiful order of our nature which God has established, whereby the very instincts and impulses of the soul draw together those of the same kindred for mutual protection. And, secondly, we are in the presence of a common foe—the Canaanite and the Perizzite—ready to take advantage of our strife for the injury of both, and to the dishonor of the name of God. Here is the substance of the argument against all strifes in the Church of God. We are all brethren of the same household of faith; and we live ever in the presence of a hostile world, between whom and us the grace of God has "put enmity"—a world ever ready to take advantage of our strifes Nor can these two thoughts ever be too prominently before the mind of the Church. All who by Divine grace are born again are children of the same Father, by a double bond, and therefore brethren of the same family. If, then, those of the same flesh and blood should be as one, surely those "born not of flesh and blood, nor of the will of man, but of God," are doubly one. And, besides this, we are all voyaging together over a very tempestuous ocean, looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. We are all meeting the same obstructions, and encompassed with the same difficulties, and need, therefore, not to be hindered by strifes with each other, but encouraged and assisted by the strength which grows out of union in the same great brotherhood. S. R.

V. 10 describes the appearance of the valley, plain of the Jordan, as it was before the great catastrophe in which the five cities perished. From the lofty highlands on the west, more than three thousand feet above the plain of the valley, the eye could trace the stream of the Jordan, winding its way through meadow-lands, and groves, and cultivated fields, and losing itself in a beautiful lake bordered by rich plains, that furnished subsistence to the thronged cities that dotted their surface. The great depression of the valley-plain, more than thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, gave to this tract a tropical climate; and being all "a well-watered region," the more intense the heat the more active and vigorous was every form of vegetation. To the eye that beheld this scene, stretching far to the north and south, it seemed "like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt." T. J. C.

**Lot lifted up his eyes.** They were encamped on that mountain on the east of Bethel, having Bethel on the west and Hai on the east, where Abram had built the altar and called on the name of the Lord. E. H. B.——Immediately east of the low gray hills on which the Canaanitish Luz and the Jewish Bethel afterward stood, rises,—as the highest of a succession of eminences, each now marked by some vestige of ancient edifices,—a conspicuous hill; its topmost summit resting, as it were, on the rocky slopes below, and distinguished from them by the olive-grove which clusters over its broad surface above. From this height, thus offering a natural base for the patriarchal altar, and a fitting shade for the patriarchal tent, Abraham and Lot must be considered as taking the wide survey of the country "on the right hand and on the left," such as can be enjoyed

from no other point in the neighborhood. To the east there rises in the foreground the jagged range of the hills above Jericho ; in the distance the dark wall of Moab ; between them lies the wide valley of the Jordan, its course marked by the tract of forest in which its rushing stream is enveloped : and down to this valley a long and deep ravine, now, as always, the main line of communication by which it is approached from the central hills of Palestine—a ravine rich with vine, olive, and fig, winding its way through ancient reservoirs and sepulchres, remains of a civilization now extinct, but in the times of the patriarchs not yet begun. In the south and west the view commanded the bleak hills of Judea, varied by the heights crowned with what were afterward the cities of Benjamin, and overhanging what in a later day was to be Jerusalem, and in the far distance the southern range, on whose slope is Hebron. Northward are the hills which divide Judea from the rich plains of Samaria. And now, from this spot, he and his kinsman made the choice which determined the fate of each, according to the view which that summit commands. Lot looked down on the green valley of the Jordan, its tropical luxuriance visible even from thence, beautiful and well watered as that garden of Eden of which the fame still lingered in their own Chaldean hills, as the valley of the Nile in which they had so lately sojourned. A. P. S.

In this fertile plain—or "circle"—of Jordan the four cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim appear to have been situated. In the subsequent account of their destruction, the same topographical term "plain" (Hebrew *circle* or *circuit*) is employed. Mr. Grove thinks that the mention of the Jordan is conclusive as to the situation of the district, for the Jordan ceases where it enters the Dead Sea, and can have no existence south of that point. *Dic. B.* ——As it is hardly possible for any one to read the account without feeling that Abram and Lot were actually looking down on Sodom and Gomorrah, when "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan," it follows that those cities must have been situated on some part of the plain north of the Dead Sea and visible from the heights of Bethel. *Wilson.* ——For the northern site we have the argument from the simple statement of the inspired writer, who calls them "the cities of the plain," or *circle* of Jordan ; an expression which cannot possibly apply to any other than the northern end of the Dead Sea. "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan ; and Lot journeyed *east.*" Looking from these hills the plain of Jericho and its far more extensive sister plain of Shittim, on the east side of the river, are spread almost at the beholder's feet. It is probable that some of the four cities were on the east side of the Jordan. H. B. T.

The meaning will become clear if one will read all the middle portion of the verse as a parenthesis, as follows : "and Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jor lan (that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord like the land of Egypt), until thou comest to Zoar." [*Zoar* (Bela), here so called by anticipation (ch. 14 : 2, 8 ; 19 : 22).] Lot saw all the plain of the Jordan as far as Zoar, or until you come to Zoar. Zoar was both the limit of the plain and the limit of vision in that direction, as far as the land was concerned. How much of the Dead Sea he saw is not stated ; but no human vision, unless miraculously aided, could reach to the southern end and distinguish anything ; while from the point where he stood the greenness and beauty of the great Shittim plain are distinctly seen. The phrase, "all the plain of the Jordan," cannot include the salt marsh at the southern end of the Dead Sea, since this marsh is fifty miles from the river, and belongs to a water system entirely distinct from that at the northern end of the sea. The few ruins at the south end are insignificant. The small amount of fertile land there could never have been a desirable location for towns or villages. On the other hand, there is a remarkable group of tells (mounds) at the north end of the Dead Sea, which are covered with ruins, and some of which are the sites of cities that existed in the days of Joshua. *Merrill.*

**11. Lot chose all the plain of Jordan.** We find not any instance of deference or respect to his uncle, in the whole management. Abram having offered him the choice, without compliment he accepted it, and made his election. Passion and selfishness make men rude. H.——He seeks not first the kingdom as the primary idea, and as secondary to that what else God may give. He seeks first the maximum herd of cattle, and with that as much of religion as time will permit him to exercise. Hence while the record of Abram always is that he set up his altar, that is never said of Lot. Lot lifted up his eyes--real grazier's eyes—and could see nothing but that rich bottom along the lower Jordan, with its waving grass ; and Sodom and Gomorrah in the centre —such a market. But Sodom and Gomorrah

are very wicked places—no place of desire to a saint of God! True; but Lot is after their money, not their wickedness. He would not think of settling there, or being nearer than to be within reach of market. To that one idea, all must be sacrificed—character, family, everything. S. R.

Better doth it beseem every son of Abraham to win with love, than to sway with power. Abraham yields over his right of choice; Lot takes it. And behold, Lot is crossed in that which he chose, Abraham is blessed in that which was left him; God never suffers any man to lose, by an humble remission of his right in a desire of peace. *Bp. H.*——Lot lost all he had; he lost his wife; and he had like to have lost his life, had not Abraham prevailed with God for his deliverance. This choice was made about 20 years before Sodom was destroyed. *Bp. Wilson.*——Lot makes the worst choice, while he thinks that he has chosen well. For his worldly-mindedness, the sin in his choice, he was first punished through the plundering of his house, and his captivity in the war of the kings, which followed soon after his choice, and then through his fearful flight from Sodom, and the losses, misfortunes, and crimes which were connected with it. Thus the want of regard to true piety, the selfishness, the carelessness as to the snares of the world, must ever be punished. And, indeed, it is just when one thinks that in his own wilful and sinful ways he has attained his highest wishes, he finds himself ensnared in the retributions of divine righteousness, which rules over him and works with solemn irony. *Lange.*—— Lot chose wisely, as they of the world speak. Well, if this world be all—he got a rich soil—became a prince, had kings for his society and neighbors. It was nothing to Lot that "the men of the land were sinners before the Lord exceedingly"—enough that it was well watered everywhere. F. W. R.

This brief history throws around the language, "he pitched his tent as far as Sodom," a meaning of fearful and momentous interest. Here was that passage in his life which was ominous of all his future disaster; which was, in fact, its procuring cause. We shall find Lot's experience a prototype. The grand reason why men are drawn into sin, or at least into irreligious and worldly company till they become Sodomized in hardness of heart, is in very many cases the purpose of making money. What friendships and partnerships money makes! What crimes it glosses over, what meanness it covers, what infamy it hides! And if these things are so, can we wonder that good men often forget their religion while they hurry on to make money? They pitch their tents near Sodom without knowing the character of the place—except that a heavy business is done there. They leave the Abrahams, the praying men, and mix themselves up with those that worship the dollar—the Judases, and Demases, and Balaams—whom they will soon resemble. Their families are becoming naturalized Sodomites, and they are, perhaps, coining the eternal hopes and welfare of their children into the wealth and fortune which they mean to leave them when they die. *Gillett.*

**13. Sinners before the Lord.** Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim are mentioned (Gen. 10 : 19) as among the first settlements of the Canaanites. The fertility of the soil in this Valley of the Jordan, with the luxurious and enervating character of the climate, rapidly developed the sensual vices of this early civilized but depraved race. Their wickedness is mentioned here perhaps in anticipation of the history in ch. 19; but partly also in order to exhibit more clearly the thoughtlessness and worldliness of Lot in choosing their neighborhood for his residence, as distinguished from the unselfish spirit of Abraham. E. H. B.

Lot's eye regarded neither the dangers sleeping beneath, nor the light of God above, but only the corn and wine and verdant pastures. It is not the part of religion to teach us to despise natural beauty, or make us prefer to cultivate barren soil if we can get better. Asceticism is no feature of the Bible, from first to last. But to make outward advantage the first and main object in choosing our path in life, is certainly not the guidance of the Word of God; and either Lot was without true principle at the time, or he had for the season forgotten it. Wealth, or the chance of making it, is not the one thing needful; and that man pursues a very unwise and unchristian course who rushes straight at it, without taking other things into account. There are many signs of materialism in our age, and this among them, that the acquisition of money is one of the first things which men think of in choosing a profession for themselves or their children. Our natural capability of mind is one thing to be considered, for only as we cultivate it can we be most useful to our fellow-men, and most happy in ourselves. It is not with impunity that a man can do violence to his own nature, or crush that of his child, with no other motive than hasting to be rich. And still higher than natural taste is principle. The question, Can I, with a clear

sense of duty, enter into such a line of pursuit? Am I not venturing into relationships where it will be hard, if not impossible, for me to maintain a conscience void of offence? These points do not seem at all to have troubled Lot, or they were lightly put aside in view of his material interests. We do him no injustice, for he remained clinging to Sodom, years afterward, though he must have felt the deleterious atmosphere. He returned to Sodom when he had lost all, and had recovered it again through Abram. That sharp warning was ineffectual, and he needed to be forced from the place by God's destroying angel. What weighed with him all the while was that which determined him at first,—the rich returns of the fertile soil. When, in any step of life, the readiest thought which occurs to a man is not duty, or benevolence, or mental taste and capability, but bare worldly advantage, let him look at it well in other lights. Such a motive, if indulged, is certain to end by shutting out his view of all that is high and true in life, and to lead him into dark and miry ways. *Ker.*

**14. The Lord said unto Abram.** He was more than rewarded for his true action toward Lot. We may be sure that this was a great crisis in the life of Abram; and, in his noble and unworldly conduct, we must "glorify the grace of God." It is likely that up to this time he had viewed Lot as his heir. The first promise, "I will make thee a great nation," may have been regarded as consistent with this. But now Lot was gone; and at this very time the blank was filled by the direct promise of "seed as the dust of the earth." *Tomkins.* ——**15. All the land thou seest.** God renewed to him the promise first given at Shechem, that the land in which he was a stranger should become the possession of himself and his posterity. From that outlook, on the hill-summit east of Bethel, the view in every direction, except the west, was far-reaching; and westward it stretched across the almost entire width of the plateau of Judea. N. C. B.—— God promised Canaan to Abram, and yet Abram never inherited Canaan: to the last he was a wanderer there; he had no possession of his own in its territory; if he wanted even a tomb to bury his dead, he could only obtain it by purchase. Now the surprising point is that Abram, deceived, as you might almost say, did not complain of it as a deception; he was even grateful for the non-fulfilment of the promise: he does not seem to have expected its fulfilment; he did not look for Canaan, but for "a city which had foundations;" his faith appears to have consisted in disbelieving the letter, almost as much as in believing the spirit of the promise. F. W. R.——His conduct suggests a further remark:—He had been promised the land in which he now lived as a stranger;—he had valiant troops, though few in number, who, doubtless, had he so desired, might have conquered for him a sufficient portion of it. But he did not attempt it: for he knew God could bring about His design and accomplish His promise in His own good time, without his own use of unlawful means. This is the true spirit of faith: to wait upon God, to watch for and to follow His guidance, not to attempt to go before Him. *Newman.*

**15, 16.** In the renewed form, the promise embraces two more particulars—viz., perpetuity, "forever;" and the increase of his posterity to an innumerable multitude, "as the dust of the earth." Both stretch far beyond the bounds of earth and nature to the heavenly Canaan, and comprehend the spiritual posterity of Abram, his children by faith. C. G. B.——The design of God was not that Abram *himself* should possess it, but that his posterity should, till the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. And this is chiefly what is to be understood by the words *for ever*, *âd ôlam*, to the end of the present dispensation, and the commencement of the new. *Ôlam* means either ETERNITY, which implies the *termination* of all *time* or *duration*, such as is measured by the celestial luminaries: or a *hidden, unknown period*, such as includes a *completion* or *final termination* of a particular *era*, *dispensation*, etc. The first is its *proper* meaning; the latter its *accommodated* meaning. A. C.——All that God does is eternal. Even the transitory things He bestows with reference to the eternal, and if a man receives them in faith they bear everlasting fruit. The land of Canaan is the pledge and type of the new world, which the faithful, who are the children of Abram, shall receive for an everlasting possession. *Gerl.*

**16.** The Angel of the Covenant appeared to Abram in *open day*, when he could take a distinct view of the length and the breadth of this good land. The revelation made (ch. 15 : 5) was evidently made in the *night*, for then he was called to number the *stars*, which could not be seen but in the night season: here he is called on to *number the dust of the earth*, which could not be seen but in the *daylight*. A. C.

The world was waiting for some Abraham—*i.e.* for just the system of which the great and godly Abraham was the prominent figure and the historic representative. The patent points

in this new system, put in briefest words, were —*Abraham the head* of a great family ; the *founder* of a great nation ; the *representative* of the family covenant and its first and illustrious exemplar ; the *progenitor* of the Great, long-promised Messiah ; and coupled with his lineal posterity, the *repositories* of God's truth and promises—*his offspring*, the people with whom God dwelt and was publicly worshipped for ages in the presence of the idolatrous nations of the earth ; over whom God became their visible earthly Sovereign, their recognized King and God. Thus the Lord laid the foundation for progressive manifestations of himself and for a growing development of religious truth and of its legitimate forces from age to age till the Messiah should appear. H. C.

Great lives are trained by great promises. The world has never been left without a great promise singing in its wondering and troubled heart—something to rely upon : something to appeal to when difficulty was extreme. God never calls men for the purpose of making them less than they are, except when they have been dishonoring themselves by sin. This may be taken as a law : God's calls are upward ; they are calls toward fuller life, purer light, and sweeter joy. Men do not know their full capacity, except in the service of God : his presence in the soul is a life-expanding and life-glorifying presence. This is the claim that we set up on behalf of true religion—the religion of Jesus Christ—that it exalts human nature, it enriches the soul, it increases the substance and worth of manhood. To confound obedience with slavery is to overlook the argument which is founded upon the nature of God ; to obey the little, the mean, the paltry is to be enslaved ; to enter the cage of custom or passion is to be subject to bondage ; but to accept the invitation of the sun, and to poise ourselves in his gladdening presence is liberty and joy. J. P.

**17.** Lot turned his face eastward, and left to Abram the hardship, the glory, and the virtues of the rugged hills, the sea-breezes, and the inexhaustible future of Western Palestine. It was Abram's henceforward ; he was to "arise and walk through the length and through the breadth of it, for God had given it to him." This was the first appropriation, the first consecration of the Holy Land. A. P. S.——We passed over the high region or "mountain east of Bethel ;" the place to which Abram returned from Egypt, and in which God called him to walk through the length and breadth of the land. The region commands a wide view. In travelling over these places one begins early to perceive that not only is the geography and scenery of Palestine "a fifth gospel," but it is a second Pentateuch, Joshua and Kings. The feeling deepened at every step of the journey. S. C. B.

The result to Abraham is a vision of God—a glorious vision—saying, "Arise, *go* where you will, I am with thee ; all is yours." Lot goes to the well-watered bottom land. He pitches his tent only *toward* Sodom. But it turns out according to that remarkable graduation of the psalmist, Blessed is the man who *walks* not in the ways of the *ungodly*, *stands* not in the way of *sinners* nor *sits* in the seat of the *scorner*. So gradually Sodom appears less dreadful. Business calls him there often. He is a man of wealth ; the families of Sodom court him and his family till at length a town residence is taken. Both these men are rich alike. Both have suddenly added to their wealth. *Both are* worshippers of the true Jehovah. The evidences of piety in the one are of course much brighter than in the other. We should be led from the history of the other to conclude the contrary. But as he is emphatically called *just Lot* by the apostle, we accept him as a believer. It is undoubtedly the teaching of Scripture that there are a great many varieties and degrees of Christian character, and down to the very feeblest pulses of spiritual life. The grace of God in this world has to work upon all sorts of materials. Often the noblest specimens of men are left in sin, while some of the meanest are taken. So we say in answer to cavils of the men of the world at the meanness of some Christians : When you are comparing character as evidence for or against Christianity, act fairly and compare grade of natural character with grade. If Jesus Christ had to select out only the better specimens of men for His kingdom, your process would be fair enough. But it is not when He tells you that He comes to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance ; to save to the uttermost. S. R.

The lesson to be gained from the history of Abram and Lot is obviously this—that nothing but a clear apprehension of things unseen, a simple trust in God's promises, and the greatness of mind thence arising, can make us act above the world—indifferent, or almost so, to its comforts, enjoyments, and friendships ; or in other words, that its goods corrupt the common run even of religious men who possess them. Lot, as well as Abram, left his own country "by faith," in obedience to God's command ; yet on a further trial, in which the will of God was not so clearly signified, the one was found "without spot and blameless," the other

" was saved so as by fire." Abraham became the " father of all them that believe ;" Lot obscured the especial hope of his calling—impaired the privileges of his election—for a time allowed himself to resemble the multitude of men, as now seen in a Christian country, who are religious to a certain point, and inconsistent in their lives, not aiming at perfection. *Newman.*

We see in these two persons, that the conduct of parents descends, in its effects, very far into their posterity. Abraham, by his piety, transmitted his religion to his descendants ; while in those of Lot we find no disposition to it. Abraham is great in this world, and he is great in heaven ; for the highest happiness of the saints is represented by our Saviour in parable, as being found reclining on Abraham's bosom. True greatness can be found only in the fear of God, in the freest and fullest devotedness of heart to his service and a fear of sinning against Him. *R. Hall.*

All good men have in their measure all graces ; for he, by whom they have any, does not give one apart from the whole : he gives the root, and the root puts forth branches. But since time, and circumstances, and their own use of the gift, and their own disposition and character, have much influence on the mode of its manifestation, so it happens, that each good man has his own distinguishing grace, apart from the rest, his own particular hue and fragrance and fashion, as a flower may have. Abraham, Jacob's forefather, was the pattern of *faith.* He seems to have had something very noble and magnanimous about him. He could realize and make present to him things unseen. He followed God in the dark as promptly, as firmly, with as cheerful a heart, and bold a stepping, as if he were in broad daylight. There is something very great in this ; and therefore, Paul calls Abraham *our* father, the father of Christians as well as of Jews. For we are especially bound to walk by faith, not by sight ; and are blessed through faith ; and justified by faith, as was faithful Abraham. *Newman.*

The Patriarch appears in the page of Scripture as a solitary ; a solitary in his creed ; a solitary in the extreme and dim remoteness of the scene and object upon which his mind rests. As a believer he has cast off the popular religion and is a witness against it ; as a prince he is a wanderer without alliances in a strange land ; and his only compensation is that he is enabled to live in thought out of the present scene and circumstances, and to repose upon futurity. We are brought here for the first time in contact with the majesty, the strength, and the splendor of prophecy in the religion of the chosen race. There is nothing in the history of the character, the sentiment, the aspirations of nations, which is equal to or can for a moment be compared with this mighty impulse and current of faith in the Jewish community. The creed of Abraham has become the creed of the civilized world. The Patriarch's creed has been victorious over the idolatry of the human race, and grown from a deposit in the breast of one man into a universal religion. It is this force which is characteristic of Jewish prophecy ; there may be true prophecy elsewhere in the world, but it is weak, it is broken and its utterance dies away on the ear. In the Jewish channel it is strong, compact and consistent ; it has a fixed and confident hold upon the future, a grasp of forecast and a practical ever-gazing assurance ; it provided from the first for its own transmission, created laws and institutions, and made a prophetical nation. *Mozley.*

**18.** We are told what Abraham did, when God had thus confirmed the promise to him. 1. He *removed his tent.* God bid him *walk through the land,* that is, " Do not think of fixing in it, but expect to be always unsettled, and walking through it to a better Canaan ;" in compliance with God's will herein, *he removes his tent,* conforming himself to the condition of a pilgrim. 2. *He builded there an altar,* in token of his thankfulness to God for the kind visit he had made him. When God meets us with gracious promises, he expects that we should attend him with our humble praises. H.

**Hebron.** This is the first mention of this famous city. It is situated among the mountains, 20 Roman miles S. of Jerusalem, and the same distance N. of Beersheba. It is one of the most ancient cities in the world. In Num. 13 : 22 it is said to have been built seven years before Zoan, in Egypt. *Alf.*——This was the third resting-place of Abram : 1. Shechem, 2. Bethel, 3. Hebron. Near it was the cave of Machpelah, where he and Sarah were buried. It is now called *El Khalil,* " the friend," *i.e.* the house of the friend of God. E. H. B.——Hebron was the earliest seat of civilized life in Palestine, its immediate neighborhood singularly favorable for all kinds of tillage and garden culture, especially the growth of the vine. Abraham in the first instance did not take up his abode in the town of Hebron, which was occupied by a lowland Hittite tribe. The rich valleys which sloped down to it from the north were occupied by three chiefs of the Amorites (mountaineers), Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner, the first of whom gave his name not only to those

oak-trees, beneath one of which Abraham's own tent was pitched, but for a time to the neighboring town itself. W. H.——In an oak grove not far from the town Abram now made his headquarters Here he made for himself the nearest approach to a home which Providence permitted him in this world. At Mamre he experienced most of the chief honors and trials of his later life. At Hebron he found at last a resting-place. *Dykes.*

The country around Hebron gives one an idea of what Palestine once was in agricultural wealth, and of what it again might be with a thrifty people and an honest government. The hills are terraced, step above step, and planted with the grape-vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate, the apricot and the olive, or are sown in grain. Hebron has two elements of interest to all travellers : the first is its almost unrivalled age, its history stretching back as far as any still-existing cities can be traced with certainty —Damascus being its one rival, Sidon, perhaps, another ; the second, its close association with the life of that grand figure of antiquity, Abraham, and his immediate descendants, the patriarchs of the Hebrews. It was from Hebron that Abram started northward in pursuit of the confederate chieftains from Mesopotamia who had harried the cities of the plain, taking captive his nephew Lot. It was at Hebron that the promise was given to the childless patriarch that his seed should be as the stars of heaven. It was at Hebron that Sarah died, and that Abraham acquired by purchase a burial-place—the only ground he ever owned in the land promised to his children—the cave of Machpelah. Here he buried Sarah, and here he too was laid to rest. Here Isaac was buried, and Rebekah. Hither the embalmed body of Jacob was brought from Egypt and laid beside the tomb of Leah. *Dulles.*

# Section 41.

## ABRAM RESCUES LOT. MELCHIZEDEK.

GENESIS 14 : 1–24.

1 AND it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Che-
2 dorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, that they made war with Bera king of
Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of
3 Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar). All these joined together in the vale of
4 Siddim (the same is the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thir-
5 teenth year they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that
were with him, and smote the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the
6 Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by
7 the wilderness. And they returned, and came to En-mishpat (the same is Kadesh), and smote
8 all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazazon-tamar. And
there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the
king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar) ; and they set the battle in array
9 against them in the vale of Siddim ; against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of
Goiim, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar ; four kings against the five.
10 Now the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits ; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled,
11 and they fell there, and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods
12 of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot,
13 Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. And there came
one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew : now he dwelt by the oaks of Mamre
the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner ; and these were confederate with Abram.
14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born
15 in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan. And he divided him-
self against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto
16 Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also
17 brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. And the

king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer
18 and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh (the same is the King's Vale). And
Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine : and he was priest of God Most
19 High. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of
20 heaven and earth : and blessed be God Most High, which hath delivered thine enemies into
21 thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give
22 me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have
23 lift up mine hand unto the LORD, God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will
not take a thread nor a shoelatchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have
24 made Abram rich : save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the
men which went with me ; Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, let them take their portion.

Joshua came upon the Canaanites as an invader, to dispossess or to exterminate. He found a population before him dense enough to occupy the whole land, numerous communities living in walled towns. Everywhere he met with hostile, defiant tribes, bold to resist each footstep of advance. Abraham came in peace, a wandering shepherd-prince, coveting no territory, aiming at no dispossession, for whom and his pursuits there was room enough without any clashing of interests between him and the inhabitants around. These were comparatively few in number, mostly dwellers in villages, tillers of the ground, cultivators of the vine, or rude artificers. There is no instance of the Canaanites resisting or resenting the residence of Abraham among them. He openly worshipped, and that exclusively, the one great God of heaven and earth. Wherever he pitched his tent he raised his altar. But his worship was the simplest and least offensive in its form and manner ; nor does it appear anywhere to have been interfered with or opposed. We are not surprised, therefore, that all Abraham's relationships and intercourse with the Canaanitish chiefs were of the friendliest description, and that a speedy and close confederacy was formed between him and the three Amoritish brothers beside him at Mamre. W. H.

**1–24.** In this chapter a graphic though brief account is given of the invasion of Palestine by certain Eastern princes, during the life of Abraham ; and, independent of all views about inspiration, the narrative bears strong internal evidence of historical accuracy. Names, places, and lines of march are given with the clearness and minuteness of contemporary history. J. L. P.——If any one were inclined, with this unique piece before him, to doubt the real existence of Abraham and Lot, or the historical greatness of the former, he could scarcely be supposed to have commenced the study of the marks by which any really historical circumstance can be recognized. *Ewald.*——The acceptance and incorporation of such earlier true narratives into this history, no more militates against its proper Mosaic authorship than the introduction of large extracts from Bradford or Morton, or other and later sources of contemporary information, interferes with the proper authorship of a history of the United States by Bancroft ; and when this latter historian, recording with quotations a condensed statement of the establishment of Fort du Quesne, adds, "where now is Pittsburgh," he almost exactly imitates the Hebrew historian, in Gen. 14, with a mere substitution of the English idiom. S. C. B.——This account of a general raid by the powers on the Euphrates and Tigris upon the whole western region near the Mediterranean Sea is introduced here only incidentally as explanatory of the story of Lot after he had separated from his uncle and chosen the beautiful bottom land of the Jordan, "pitching his tent *toward* Sodom." Its spiritual lesson is deeply interesting, bringing out, as it does, the hero of the faith and the man of peace, who said, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, for we are brethren," in the new character of the brave man of war and the magnanimous conqueror. S. R.

**1.** Amraphel, the king of Shinar, the country whereof Babylon was the capital, is plainly, in the entire narrative, secondary and subordinate to Chedorlaomer, king of Elam. The conquered monarchs "serve" Chedorlaomer (ver. 4), not Amraphel ; Chedorlaomer leads both expeditions, the other kings are "with him" (vs. 5, 17), as subordinate allies, or, more probably, as tributaries. This is an inversion of the usual position occupied by Babylonia toward Elam, its eastern neighbor, of which, until recently, there was no profane confirmation. Recently, however, traces have been found of an Elamitic conquest of Babylon, and also of an Elamitic dynasty there at an early date, which show that there were times when the more eastern of the two countries which lay side by side upon the Lower Tigris had the greater power, and exercised dominion over the more western. G. R.

——Elam lies beyond Chaldea, on the east side of the Tigris, and embraces the rich flats which separate that river from the bounding mountain range of Zagros. Its capital was the very ancient and powerful city of Susa. Its present ruler, whose name reads in Genesis Chedorlaomer, but in the monuments Khudur-Lagamer, now extended his arms as far as Canaan. His object is evident. The ambition of all empires on the Euphrates, from the earliest time, was to keep open communication with their rivals in Egypt. The only practicable route betwixt the Euphrates and the Nile, either for military marches or for commerce, traversed the great Syrian Desert south-westward till it struck the northern end of the Jordan valley, then either crossed to the coast or held down that valley as far as the south of the Dead Sea. Possession of this route, or at least political supremacy over the tribes along its course, became, therefore, a supreme object with conquerors from the farther East. It was in this way that Palestine became in every age involved in that gigantic strife betwixt the states of Euphrates and Nile, which fills ancient history. *Dykes.*

*Arioch king of Ellasar* was also of the company. And, curiously enough, not only has *his* capital city Larsa (now Senkereh on the east of the Euphrates) been identified, but Eriaku, the same with the Hebrew Arioch, is found to be the son of Kudur-Mabuk and to have dwelt in Larsa. The fourth of these royal aggressors, Tidal king of "Goiim," is less definitely localized either in the narrative or the inscriptions, Guti or Gutium, both of which sources favor the idea that his monarchy was over less consolidated tribes to the north. S. C. B.——Goyyim or "nations" has been shown by Sir Henry Rawlinson to be a misreading for Gutium, the name given to the tract of country northward of Babylonia, which stretched from Mesopotamia to the mountains of Kurdistan, and within which the kingdom of Assyria afterward arose. G. R.——In striking correspondence to and explanation of this consecutive narrative, the inscriptions disclose great expeditions of Kudur-Mabuk and Arioch, with conquests in Syria, whereby the former attained the title "lord of Martu," *i.e.*, of the god of the West ; and Rawlinson, Sayce and Lenormant all bring the date singularly close to the time of Abraham, Rawlinson 2100 B.C., Sayce 2000, Lenormant "approximately to the time of Abraham." S. C. B. ——By aid of these disentombed inscriptions on the plains of Chaldea we have the means of verifying this account in Moses of events among the nations of the earth some four thousand years ago, and therefore this is no mere ancient legend, but veritable history. The theory of non-historic years, on the one hand, is demonstrated to be a "fond imagination," as the Scotch fathers call it. And, on the other hand, the ethnological chart of the 10th chapter of Genesis is in precise accordance with all the relics which we have of the histories of those early civilizations. S. R.

**2-4.** Each of the more important Canaanitish towns had, as the book of Joshua shows, its king. We find something like this in the earlier Greek times. The Canaanites of the rich valley Siddim, in spite of their inferior power, trusted so much to their own strength that they set themselves against the combined forces of the important countries of the east. *Gerl.*

The five towns attempted after 12 years to shake off the yoke. To chastise this revolt, Chedorlaomer undertook a second expedition. Combining his own forces with those of the three vassal rulers in the Euphrates valley, he swept across the desert, and fell upon the wild tribes which then harbored in the mountains of Bashan and Moab. The invader's plan was to ravage the country to the east, south, and south-west of the Jordan towns, before actually investing them, so as to cut them off from support from their neighbors. His progress can be tracked from tribe to tribe. Formidable clans of aborigines of great stature then held the fastnesses to the east of Jordan : the Rephaim, in the north, which was later termed Bashan ; the Zusim, between the Jabbok and the Arnon, whom afterward the Ammonites expelled ; south of the Arnon, the Emim, where Moab was by and by to dwell. Beyond the southern end of the Dead Sea, the conqueror came upon a race of cave-dwellers or Horites, in those singular rock excavations of Mount Seir which the art of a later time enlarged into the cave palaces, temples, and tombs that still astonish the traveller. This was his southern limit. Turning then sharply to the westward, the Elamites ravaged the desert which stretches between Edom and Egypt. Thence they turned back to retrace their steps eastward. *Dykes.*

**10.** Bitumen-pits of asphalt or bitumen, from which the Dead Sea was afterward called Lacus Asphaltites, or Sea of Asphalt. E. H. B.—— Bitumen, in Hebrew *chēmâr*, sometimes translated "slime," was used for cementing the bricks of Babylon. It is found in the neighborhood of that city, and also in connection with the Dead Sea. The bitumen pits in the vale of Siddim caused the defeat of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. *Deane.*

**12. They took Lot.** *They took Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom.* So near a relation of Abram should have been a companion and disciple of Abram, and should have abode by his tents ; but if he choose to dwell in Sodom, he must thank himself, if he share in Sodom's calamities. When we go out of the way of our duty, we put ourselves from under God's protection, and cannot expect that the choices which are made by our lusts should issue to our comfort. Particular mention is made of their taking Lot's *goods*, those goods which had occasioned his contest with Abram, and his separation from him. H.——That wealth which was the cause of his former quarrels is made a prey to merciless heathens ; that place which his eye covetously chose betrays his life and goods. How many Christians, while they have looked at gain, have lost themselves ! *Bp. H.*——See how Lot's choice came back on him. He grasped recklessly at worldly advantage, and twice he lost his entire possessions,—the second time, as it would seem, beyond recovery. In the first instance, the kings of the East plundered Sodom, and carried off Lot and all he had. " They took Lot *and his goods,*"—an emphatic conjunction. There was much property, and it was much to him, for his heart was in it. No doubt it was a sore blow to Lot, and was meant as a warning to quit the place. But he refused to take it, and the stroke came next time direct from God, and with more crushing weight. He who would not leave Sodom of his own free will must be driven from it by the sword of the avenging angel. He went out poorer than he entered, and all his wealth perished with the men of Sodom. *Ker.*

**13, 14.** There was no question in Abram's mind that he should do his utmost to deliver his kinsman. Though he could hope for success only by joining for the time with the Canaanitish sheiks, and seeming to be on the side of the king of Sodom, yet he did not hesitate to take that course and leave the issue with God. Herein he has left us an example which is not without its significance. There are movements, some political, some moral, in which we can hope to succeed only by accepting the alliance of men with whom in the highest parts of our nature we have no sympathy. So there are many enterprises of benevolence in which we can take no part unless we consent to work with persons of whose characters we cannot in all respects approve. What then ? Must we refuse to sit at a benevolent board because Aner, Eshcol and Mamre are there also ? No ! So long as we are in the world we shall have to meet the men of the world ; we shall have to work with them, too, in benevolent matters. And they who hold back from the fear of contamination are signally deficient in that faith for which Abraham was remarkable. W. M. T.

Abraham is treated by the native princes and chieftains of the land as " a mighty prince," an equal, if not a superior, to themselves. His house-born servants able to bear arms and to make a rapid march were not less than 318. A body of such men can be furnished only by a population four times its own number, including women and children. We can, therefore, not reckon the patriarch's camp as containing less than 1272 souls ; and this number of people could not well have been accommodated in so few as 100 tents. *Kit.*

**15, 16.** In Egypt, Abram had shown how distrustful and pusillanimous he could be. It was the capture of his nephew with all his household and fortune which roused the family spirit in the son of Terah ; and the pressure of this great need threw him once more upon God as the arm of his strength. Though the Amorite leaders beside him had their own griefs to avenge, yet Abram was the soul of the league as well as its head. *Dykes.*——He appeals to the three brother chiefs, his immediate neighbors, who rally at his cry. If each of them brought with him a following anything like Abraham's, it may have been a band of nearly 1000 men who set off in pursuit. A five or six days' rapid march carries them up to Dan, at the sources of the Jordan. There are the invaders and their prey ; three times, let us suppose, as numerous as their pursuers, but lying in loose array, in imagined security, ignorant of the pursuit. Abraham espies them, but does not rush rashly to the attack. He waits till nightfall, pursues the tactics that Gideon afterward pursued, divides his forces, from different quarters flings each company in upon the sleepers. The success is complete ; a panic is created ; they fly in all directions, leaving all their spoil behind. The victorious band chases them over the mountains to Hobah on the left hand (*i.e.*, north) of Damascus, and returns. W. H.——The success was principally due to the faith of Abram, and to the assistance of God. At the same time we must not forget that the re-enforcements of his neighbors may probably have increased the army of Abram to a thousand men, while it is erroneous to suppose that the army of Chedorlaomer, which was only intended for a foray, would be very considerable. Besides, we have to keep in mind that the enemy thought himself perfectly secure. was suddenly overtaken during a dark

night by the army of Abram, who evidently came upon them from different directions, and that confusion and panic must have ensued. K.

**17.** Abraham never stood higher in honor among his fellow-men than when the king of Sodom came out to meet him, and bowed before him.——**18.** But there came out another before whom Abraham in his turn bowed—Melchizedek, the representative of a higher than earthly honor, a greater than earthly royalty. The two men who met that day and stood in each other's presence in the "King's Dale," were each solitary in his sphere, unique in the spiritual position he occupied. The one a last surviving confessor of the faith intrusted to Noah ; the other the first recipient of that new light from Heaven, which, concentrated in the Levitical institute, was to burn for centuries in Judea for the world's enlightenment. Mysterious he is, and must remain—this king and priest of Salem, emerging from his hidden nook, his pedigree untold, his office undescribed, not a single event in all his former or in all his latter history related, appearing on that single occasion, to do that single act, to be recognized as a greater than Abraham, and then to pass away, coming and going like a spirit, casting no shadow before or behind. W. H.

**Melchizedek.** Bearing a title which Jews in after-ages would recognize as designating their own sovereign, bearing gifts which recall to Christians the Lord's Supper, this Canaanite crosses for a moment the path of Abram, and is unhesitatingly recognized as a person of higher spiritual rank than the *friend of God*. Disappearing as suddenly as he came in, he is lost to the sacred writings for a thousand years ; and then a few emphatic words for another moment bring him into sight as a type of the coming Lord of David. Once more, after another thousand years, the Hebrew Christians are taught to see in him a proof that it was the consistent purpose of God to abolish the Levitical priesthood. *Bulloch.*

He is mentioned in Ps. 110 : 4, and again in the New Testament (Heb. 5–7), where the comparison between the royal priesthood of Melchizedek and that of Jesus is drawn out at length. The special points of resemblance of Melchizedek to Christ are : 1. That he was not of the Levitical order, local, national, but previous to the giving of the Law, catholic, universal ; 2. That he was superior to Abraham, blessed and took tithes of him ; 3. That he was both king and priest ; 4. That no beginning and no end are assigned either to his priesthood or his life ; 5. His names too, "king of righteousness and king of peace," are eminently suited to a type of the Son of God (Heb. 7 : 2, 3).

**King of Salem.** Josephus, Onkelos and all the Targums understand Jerusalem, which is called Salem in Ps. 76 : 2, and this is pretty certainly the true interpretation. Probably Salem was the oldest, Jebus the next, and Jerusalem the more modern name of the same city. E. H. B.

It is interesting to see the view taken of this incident by Kaiisch, a Jew : "Everything is here significant, everything typical : it is obvious that the dim background is designed to veil a grand religious and political future. Melchizedek brought forth to Abraham bread and wine, not to refresh him or his men, for Abraham had, among the booty of the enemies, seized their large stores of provisions also, but to perform a symbolical ceremony, in which bread and wine had a typical meaning. For bread represents the ordinary daily food, the necessities of physical subsistence, while the wine points to the cheering delights of life and to the spiritual cravings of religion, in the rites of which it formed an important object." *Alf.*

**He was priest.** This is the first time that the word *priest*, *Cohen*, occurs in the Bible, and it is in connection with the worship of an ancient people, perhaps not related by blood to the chosen race. The etymological meaning of the word is unknown. The word itself is applied afterward both to the Levitical priesthood and to the priesthood of false religions. The patriarchs seem to have had no other priesthood than that of the head of the family ; but here we find Melchizedek designated as a priest and as performing many priestly acts, solemnly blessing, taking tithes, etc. E. H. B ——The evidence that his priesthood was acknowledged to be of a higher order lies in two facts : first, in the bestowal of the divine blessing upon Abram by his lips ; and next, in the offering of Abram's tithe to God through his hands. Both were strictly sacerdotal acts. He brought to the conqueror bread and wine,—not simply, as Josephus puts it, for the refreshment of his followers, but as a symbol of the divine blessing, which as God's priest he invoked upon the head of God's prophet and servant. For the first time these type-forms of all solid and liquid food—destined long after to become sacramental symbols of the nutriment of the spirit's higher life—occur as emblems of every material blessing. They represent all those products of the soil which minister to man. The blessing which was uttered over the hero, along with such symbols of benediction, recognized his military suc-

cess as given by God. God is the true ruler of the rescued land, and the only giver of victory to the arms of its defenders. *Dykes.*

**The most high God.** Here we meet with a new name of God, *El*, the Lasting, the Mighty, cognate with Elohim, and previously occurring in the compound proper names Mehujael, Mahalalel, and Bethel. We have also an epithet of God, *Elion the most high*, now appearing for the first time. Hence we perceive that the unity, the omnipotence, and the absolute pre-eminence of God were still living in the memory and conscience of a section at least of the inhabitants of this land. M.——It is to be observed that there is not used regarding him, nor does he use, the title of Jehovah, but that of the HIGH GOD, a title found also in the question addressed by the Moabitish king Balak to his prophet Balaam : but that Abram in answering the King of Sodom probably in his presence, affirms the identity of his covenant-God, Jehovah, with the *High God, possessor of heaven and earth*, of whom Melchizedek had spoken. *Alf.*

Take all philosophy from Plato to Cousin, and where do we find any ideas of God more elevated than those that are associated with these grand epithets so frequent in the Old Testament, and most frequent in its oldest parts? What is there which carries us farther toward the infinite in all directions? And yet, it should be observed, with what unshrinking boldness the Bible writers connect with them the ideas of the local and the finite. This is, in fact, one chief peculiarity of the Scriptures. The Divine Being is very near, and yet very far off. The God of the universe is at the same time regarded as a patrial Deity, the "God of his people." He who "fills heaven and earth," is spoken of as dwelling in consecrated localities. The Governor of all worlds in time and space, the Most High, the Almighty, the Everlasting, is at the same time the God of Mamre, of Bethel, of Peniel. El Olam, El Shaddai, El Elioun, is at the same time El Elohe Israel. . . . It would have been far better for the growth of Biblical knowledge in the common mind, had more of these old Hebrew terms, as Sheol and the Divine names Elohim, El Olam, El Shaddai, El Elioun, etc., been transferred directly into our common English version. They would long ere this have become naturalized. The spirit of the word, which is ever strongly attached to its old body, would have come down with it. T. L.

Melchizedek is mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures only in the 110th Psalm and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chaps. 5, 6, 7), where the apostle, aiming to show the pre-eminence of Christ's priesthood over that of Aaron, avails himself of the somewhat remarkable coincidences which subsisted between what is here related of Melchizedek and what he designed to affirm of Christ. As Melchizedek combined in his own person the dignity both of king and priest, this fact enabled him to illustrate more strikingly, to the Jews to whom he wrote, the union of the same offices in Christ, who sits "a priest upon his throne." Again, as far as appears from the sacred record, Melchizedek was a priest, not by inheritance, but by immediate divine appointment. He derived his office from no predecessor, and delivered it down to no successor, but stands before us in the sacred record single and alone, constituting himself an order of priesthood. In this respect he was eminently "made like the Son of God;" who was also a priest, not after the manner of the sons of Aaron, by descent from their predecessors, but after the similitude of Melchizedek, that is, by an immediate, divine constitution. *Bush.*

King David himself (Ps. 110) was guided to borrow this venerable figure of the grand, dim priest-king of old, before whom even the founder of his people took the second place, in order to foreshadow that coming Seed of Abram in whom was to meet every office of dignity and of service. A Priest He was to be above all consecrated men of Israel's race ; a King nobler far in blood and ampler in sway than the royal singer who owned Him for his Lord. . . . No priestly Israelite, sprung from Abram through his great-grandson Levi, can claim as lofty or divine a priesthood as the man before whom Abram himself was content to bend for the blessing. If "perfection" had been attained "through means of the Levitical priesthood," it was fair for the Christian teacher to ask his Jewish brethren, "what further need there was that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek." *Dykes.*

Amid the abundance of genealogical details of that period we know absolutely nothing of his descent ; in the roll of kings and their achievements, his name and reign, his birth and death remain unmentioned. Considering the position which he occupies toward Abram, that silence must have been intentional, and its intention typical ; that is, designed to point forward to corresponding realities in Christ. Still more clearly than its silence does the information which Scripture furnishes about Melchizedek show the deep significance of his personality. His name is "King of Righteousness," his government that of the "Prince of Peace;" he

is "a priest," neither in the sense in which Abram was, nor yet "after the order of Aaron," his priesthood being distinct and unique ; he blesses Abram, and his blessing sounds like a ratification of the bestowal of the land upon the patriarch ; while Abram gives "him tithes of all." There is in this latter tribute an acknowledgment of Melchizedek both as king and priest —as priest in giving him "tithes," and as king in giving him these tithes of all the spoil, as if he had royal claim upon it ; while Abram himself refuses to touch any of it, and his allies are only allowed to "take their portion." What lay in germ in Melchizedek was to be gradually unfolded—the priesthood in Aaron, the royalty in David—till both were most gloriously united in Christ. Melchizedek was, however, only a shadow and a type ; Christ is the reality and the antitype. It is for this reason that Scripture has shut to us the sources of historical investigation about his descent and duration of life, that by its silence it might point to the heavenly descent of Jesus. A. E.

To this person, simply because he was a righteous king and priest of the Most High God, Abraham, the elect of God, the possessor of the promises, paid tithes, and received from him a blessing ; and did it, too, at the very time he stood so high in honor, and kept himself so carefully aloof from another king then present —the king of Sodom. He placed himself as conspicuously below the one personage as he raised himself above the other. Melchizedek already in a measure possessed what Abraham still only hoped for—he reigned where Abraham's seed were destined to reign, and exercised a priesthood which in future generations was to be committed to them. The union of the two in Melchizedek was in itself a great thing—greater than the separate offices of king and priest in the houses respectively of David and Aaron ; but it was an expiring greatness : it was like the last blossom on the old rod of Noah, which thenceforth became as a dry tree. In Abraham, on the other hand, was the germ of a new and higher order of things—the promise, though still only the budding promise, of a better inheritance of blessing ; and when the seed should come in whom the promise was more especially to stand, then the more general and comprehensive aspect of the Melchizedek order was to reappear, and find its embodiment in one who could at once place it on firmer ground, and carry it to unspeakably higher results. Here, then, was a sacred enigma for the heart of faith to ponder, and for the spirit of truth gradually to unfold : Abraham, in one respect, relatively great, and in another relatively little ; personally inferior to Melchizedek, and yet the root of a seed that was to do for the world incomparably more than Melchizedek had done ; himself the type of a higher than Melchizedek, and yet Melchizedek a more peculiar type than he ! It was a mystery that could be disclosed only in partial glimpses beforehand, but which now has become comparatively plain by the person and work of Immanuel. What but the wonder-working finger of God could have so admirably fitted the past to be such a singular image of the future ! P. F.

**20. Gave a tithe.** To God, under the same character as Lord of the soil and Arbiter in battle, who alone has ordained to every tribe the bounds of its habitation, Abram devoted one tenth of the recovered spoil. The origin of this proportion—a tithe—is too remote now to be traced. Plainly it was a religious sacrifice of thanksgiving. *Dykes.*

**21–24.** Here is a war undertaken by Abram on motives the most honorable and conscientious—it was to repel aggression, and to rescue the innocent from the heaviest of sufferings and the worst of slavery ; not for the purpose of plunder, nor the extension of his territories ; therefore he takes no spoils, and returns peaceably to *his own possessions.* A. C.——He had, or might have had, a double title to the goods. They were his by *the law of arms and nations ;* having won them in the field, and in a just war ; and they might have been his by *the king's free donation,* if he had been minded to accept the offer. But Abram would not take them : contenting himself with what the Lord had blessed him with, he did not desire, neither would he take "from a thread even to a shoelatchet," of anything that appertained to the king of Sodom. *Bp. Sanderson.*

This unwillingness to incur even the shadow of an obligation may have arisen from the anxiety that not a word of reproach might be cast on him as a worshipper of the one true God ; but mingling with this may there not have been here a stirring of honest pride, the spirit of independence, a touch of nature telling us that Abraham was a true brother of our humanity ? The brotherly affection, the friendly alliance with the Amorites, the spirit, energy, and skill displayed, the quick and complete success, the renouncing of all personal advantages, the tender care for his confederates, must have raised Abraham to high repute among the Canaanitish tribes. W. H.

# Section 42.

## COVENANT WITH ABRAM.

GENESIS 15 : 1–21.

1 AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not,
2 Abram : I am thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, O Lord GOD, what
wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and he that shall be possessor of my house is Dam-
3 mesek Eliezer? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed : and, lo, one born
4 in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This
man shall not be thine heir ; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be
5 thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell
6 the stars, if thou be able to tell them : and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he
7 believed in the LORD ; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I
am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.
8 And he said, O Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto
9 him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of
10 three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took him all these, and
divided them in the midst, and laid each half over against the other : but the birds divided he
11 not. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcases, and Abram drove them away.
12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram ; and, lo, an horror of great
13 darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a
14 stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them four
hundred years ; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge : and afterward shall
15 they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace ; thou shalt be
16 buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again : for the
17 iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down,
and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these
18 pieces. In that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I
19 given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates : the Kenite,
20 and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim,
21 and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite.

It has been often pointed out, and rightly, as a proof of the genuineness of the patriarchal history, that these fathers are not represented as performing miracles. The myth would certainly have adorned their honored heads with a wreath of wonders. A still stronger proof of the sacred truthfulness of this history is the fact that it begins with the mind-miracle of the faith of Abraham. No one in later ages within the old covenant times reached the height of faith that Abraham did. This faith, standing at the threshold of the old dispensation, like the life of Christ at the threshold of the new, could not be invented. It stretches, as Paul has shown (Gal. 3), across the whole old covenant history, which, as depending on it, stands beneath it, and points directly onward to Christ himself. *Auberlen.*

Ten years had now elapsed since Abram bade farewell to his fatherland at God's bidding, yet the hopes with which he entered Canaan seemed as far as ever from being realized. Only twice during these years had God broken silence. The voice which spoke in Haran had spoken once at Moreh on his arrival, and again near Bethel on his return from Egypt. Each successive utterance confirmed what had gone before. Each added a little definiteness to the original promise. In Haran God said : "I will show thee a land : I will make of thee a great nation." At Moreh, both the halves of this promise became better defined : "This is the land : I will give it to thy seed." Still more ample was the third repetition of it. Then Abram was told to search Canaan through, with the assurance that it should become his own, "in the length of it, and the breadth of it ;" while the seed of promise was to be as numerous as the dust of the land beneath his feet. So much, then, and no more, had been given to the man on which to rest his confidence. How such prospects as these were to be realized had not

yet been told. Of their ever being realized at all, no sign appeared. Abram was a childless man. *Dykes.*

Abram, a man of peaceful tastes and habits, had been roused to an unwonted course of action ; but now all the recent excitement has passed away. Human regrets and fears press him down ; and solemn and earnest thoughts overwhelm him. What is his reward for all the toil and labor he has undergone? Lot, whose alienated heart he had probably hoped to win by so great a service, is still as far from him as ever. For the sake of the fat pastures and well-watered lands of Sodom, he is content still to dwell among men whom he must by this time have known from experience to be "sinners before the Lord exceedingly." *Kit.*

**1.** A signal manifestation of himself was now made to Abram by the personal WORD OF THE LORD ; who announced Himself as the same GOD who had brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give him the inheritance of the land of Canaan. *Hales.*——This is the first time that the expression so frequent afterward "the word of the LORD" occurs in the Bible. It has been questioned whether the "vision" was a dream or waking vision. The same word is used of Balaam, "which saw the *vision* of the Almighty, falling, but having his eyes open" (Num. 24 : 4, 16). The way in which Abram was led out and saw the stars, and the subsequent reality of the sacrifice, look like a waking vision, and it is not till v. 12 that he falls into a deep sleep. E. H. B.——God revealed his will : 1. By a *personal appearance* of Him who was afterward incarnated for the salvation of mankind. 2. By an *audible voice*, sometimes accompanied with emblematical appearances. 3. By *visions*, which took place either in the night, in ordinary sleep, or when the persons were cast into a temporary trance, by daylight, or when about their ordinary business. 4. By the *ministry of angels*, appearing in human bodies, and performing certain miracles to accredit their mission. 5. By the powerful agency of the *Spirit of God upon the mind*, giving it a strong conception, and supernatural persuasion of the truth of the things perceived by the understanding. So unequivocal were the discoveries which God made of himself, that on the minds of those to whom they were made, not one doubt was left, relative either to the truth of the subject, or that it was God himself who made the discovery. A. C.

**Thy shield and reward.** The true defence of the soul against fear, and her true recompense under sacrifice or loss in the path of duty, is God Himself. That He is our "shield" so long as we do His will, our "reward" for whatever His will may cost us, is the real stay of faith. To such a deep and everlasting source of support and consolation did the Almighty design to lead His desponding servant by those opening words of the new oracle : "Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." God is better than His gifts! The best portion any soul can win is to know, and love, and possess in the indestructible communion of love, Him who is the possessor of earth and heaven! *Dykes.*

The consideration that God himself is, and will be, a shield to his people to secure them from all destructive evils, and a shield round about them, should be sufficient to silence all their perplexing, tormenting fears. I will be *thy exceeding great reward;* not only thy rewarder, but thy reward. Abram had generously refused the rewards which the king of Sodom offered him, and here God comes and tells him he shall be no loser by it. The rewards of believing obedience and self-denial are exceeding great. God himself is the chosen and promised felicity of holy souls ; chosen in this world, promised in a better. He is the *portion of their inheritance, and their cup.* H.——There are words that are welcomed as friends the very first time we hear them. They are, too, nearly always short words, words that a child can say and that the heart needs. Look at such short words as life, love, peace, rest, faith, hope, home! Words small as drops of dew, yet holding the sun! And, wonderful in graciousness, God himself and his dear Son take up these words and claim them as their own. It is *God* that says, "I am thy *shield;*" and it is *Christ* that says, "I am the vine ;" "I am the door ;" "I am the true bread ;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life ;" "I am the light of the world."

**2. And Abram said, Lord God.** This is the first use of these two words together, the words being *Adonai* JEHOVAH. The same combination occurs only twice more in the whole of the five books of Moses, and these cases are both in Deuteronomy. It is instructive to notice how great words are used in great necessities : this sacred word "shield" is used in the necessity of fear, and this holy word "Lord God" is used in the necessity of doubt and wonder. J. P.

**2–6.** On the four previous occasions of direct communications from God, the patriarch makes no response ; no other answer comes from him than the simple trust, the prompt obedience, the ready sacrifice. It is in this fifth interview that his lips open before the Lord. To the

gracious and seasonable assurance, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," his reply is, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" Silence follows the strange speech, a silence broken, but not by God. "And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." The freedom is not repelled, nor the impatience rebuked. He is simply told that he was mistaken as to Eliezer and the heirship, and then led forth and bade to look up to that magnificent spectacle—a cloudless Eastern sky at midnight. "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: so shall thy seed be." Alone with God, in the deep silence of the night, gazing on that starry host, such an impression of the boundless power and love and faithfulness of Jehovah fills Abram's spirit that all doubts dissolve; improbabilities, apparent impossibilities, disappear; he staggers no longer at the promise. It is of him at this time and in these impressive circumstances it is said, "He believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness." It was a pure act of faith, without any of its ordinary adjuncts. The one and only thing that he was called at the time to do was to confide. And the faith he exercised was as strong as it was pure. The Hebrew word expressing it is unique in the fulness and force of its significance—"He was supported, he was built up, he reposed as a child in its mother's arms." Where, in all Old Testament history, can we find an instance of simpler, purer, fuller, and more confiding trust in God? Where could Paul have found a better type and illustration of that "faith without works" by which alone the sinner is justified before God? W. H.

Abram's repeated complaint was that which gave occasion to this promise. The great affliction that sat heavy upon Abram was the want of a child; and the complaint of this he here *pours out before the Lord, and shows before him his trouble* (Ps. 142 : 2). Though we must never complain *of* God, yet we have leave to complain *to* him, and to be large and particular in the statement of our grievances; and it is some ease to a burdened spirit to open its case to a faithful and compassionate friend; such a friend God is, whose ear is always open. H. ——Abram told God his fear in plain words. He said, "I have no child; all my goods are in the hands of a steward, a true enough servant, but still not a son; what is to become of all these tokens of thy love?" and while he was talking the stars came out, throng upon throng, glowing overhead, sparkling over the distant hills, glittering in the east, throbbing like hearts on the western horizon, the singing Pleiades, the mighty Arcturus and his sons, and the Milky Way, there they were, angels talking in light, servants watching the gate of the King's city. It was in that hour that the Lord said to Abram, "Look up;" and Abram looked; and God said, "Count them, so shall thy seed be." J. P.

**6. Believed in the Lord.** The Hebrew term *aman*, from which comes the familiar "Amen," *so be it*, signifies *to be firm, fixed, stable, sure;* and in the conjugation here employed, followed by *in* or *to*, *to establish one's self, or one's faith, firmly in or toward an object, to deem, account, or make sure to one's self*, and so *to lean upon, confide in*, or *trust to, anything as stable and steadfast.* Hence as applied to the act of a believing agent in reference to divine promises, it denotes a degree of assured confidence amounting, as it were, to a creative efficacy, making to exist, substantiating, confirming the thing believed, "calling things which are not as though they were." Thus "faith is the *substance* (the substantiating principle) of things hoped for;" and in this view Christ is denominated the "Amen, the faithful and true witness," from his being the ground of the most *fixed and stable confidence*, whose *fidelity* or *trustworthiness* may be relied upon with unbounded assurance. The circumstances which gave so much efficacy and value to the faith of Abram are recited (Rom. 4 : 18–22). *Bush.*——Thus has come to the birth in the breast of Abram *faith in Jehovah*, on his simple promise in the absence of all present performance, and in the face of all sensible hindrance. Thus faith springs solely from the seed of promise. M.

"And Abram *believed!*" This is the first time the word *believed* occurs in the Bible. Paul says of Abram that "against hope he believed in hope," and "that he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief." Abram hid his life and his future in this promise. He took the promise as a fulfilment; the word was to him a *fact*. Thus he was called out of himself, out of his own trust, out of his own resources, and his life was fostered upon God,—he by-lived, lived-by, be-lieved, God! Appearances were against the promise. But Abram "staggered not." Henceforward the stars had new meanings to him, as long before the rainbow had to Noah. They spoke to him of Jehovah's presence and promised blessing. J. P.—— Abram had not merely faith in the word, but

trastfulness in the person of Jehovah as his Covenant-God. And from this faith in the living God sprang all the obedience of Abram. Like the rod of Aaron, his life budded and blossomed and bore fruit "within the secret place of the Most High." A. E.

**And he counted it to him for righteousness.** We have here the opening germ of the great doctrine of "the LORD our righteousness," redeeming us on the one hand from the sentence of death, and on the other to a title to eternal life. M.——The promise here made by the LORD to Abram was given to him before circumcision, while there was yet not even the germ of Levitical Law. It contained in it the promise of Christ. It elicited from Abram the great evangelical principle of faith. God promised that which was opposed to all appearance and likelihood. Abram relied on that promise. He surrendered his own wisdom to the wisdom of God, and so gave up his own will to the will of God. So he became the heir of the promises; and the internal principle of faith became to him the true principle of righteousness. It was the only righteousness possible for the feeble and the sinful; for it was a reposing on the power and the love of the Almighty and the Holy One. It was therefore reckoned to him as what may be called a passive righteousness, and at the same time it was productive in him of an active righteousness: for the soul which relies on the truth, power, and goodness of another, in the strength of that truth, power, and goodness, can itself be active in them all: taking advantage of the power and goodness relied upon, it becomes itself powerful and good and true. The Apostles naturally dwell upon this first recorded instance of faith, faith in God, implied faith in Christ, and consequent accounting of righteousness, recorded before all legal enactments, as illustrative of the great evangelical grace of faith, its power as resting on One who is all powerful, and its sanctifying energy, as containing in itself the principle of holiness and the germ of every righteous act. E. H. B.

Righteousness expresses in general the conformity of man to God's will,—his normal relation to God. Since God's will is elective and promissory, it consists in full surrender to elective grace and the divine word of promise. Thus it is the righteousness of faith. In this sense Abram's faith in Jehovah was imputed to him as righteousness. O.——Righteousness is here imputed to Abram. Hence mercy and grace are extended to him; mercy taking effect in the pardon of his sin, and grace in bestowing the rewards of righteousness. That in him which is counted for righteousness is faith in Jehovah promising mercy. This is the only thing in the sinner which, while it is not righteousness, has yet a claim to be counted for such, because it brings him into union with one who is just and having salvation. It is not material what the Almighty and all-gracious promises in the first instance to him that believes in him, whether it be a land, or a seed, or any other blessing. All other blessing, temporal or eternal, will flow out of that express one, in a perpetual course of development, as the believer advances in experience, in compass of intellect, and capacity of enjoyment. Hence it is that a land involves a better land, a seed a nobler seed, a temporal an eternal good. M.

When arguing from the statement respecting the righteousness of faith in Abraham, Paul lays stress simply upon the natural impossibilities that stood in the way of God's promise and on the implicit confidence Abraham had, notwithstanding, in the power and faithfulness of God, that He would perform what He had promised. "Therefore," adds the apostle, "it was imputed to him for righteousness." *Therefore*—because through faith he so completely lost sight of nature and self, and realized with undoubting confidence the sufficiency of the divine arm, and the certainty of its working. His faith was nothing else than the renunciation of all strength in himself, and a hanging in childlike trust upon God for what He was able and willing to do. Transfer such a faith to the field of the New Testament—bring it into contact with the manifestation of God in the person and work of Christ for the salvation of the world, and what would inevitably be its language but that of the apostle: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ,"—"not my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of God through faith." P. F.

Justification by faith alone is the doctrine of the Reformers; it is older, for it is the doctrine of the Fathers; it is older than the Fathers, for it is the doctrine of the Apostles; yea, older still, it is the doctrine of the Patriarchs and Prophets. It is the marrow of revealed truth. *Bp. Horsley.*

**7. To give thee this land.** We have here the assurance given to Abram, of the land of Canaan for an inheritance. Observe here, Abram made no complaint in this matter, as he had done for the want of a child. Those that are sure of an interest in the promised seed will see no reason to doubt of a title to the

promised land. If Christ is ours, heaven is ours. Observe, again, when he believed the former promise (v. 6), then God explained and ratified this to him. To him that has (improves what he has) more shall be given. H.

Faith, even though we thereby arrogate to our own sinful selves the greatest and highest of all blessings, has no arrogance and no presumption at all in it. It is yielding a due honor to one of the divine attributes, even the attribute of truth---so that the stronger the faith, the greater is the glory we render unto God. What a precious harmony is this, that our greatest peace and God's greatest glory are at one—that in counting Him faithful who has promised, we do that which at one and the same time most advances His honor and most tranquillizes our own fears. T. C.——We live by faith, and not by sight. We do not preach that all is disappointment—the dreary creed of sentimentalism ; but we preach that *nothing* here is disappointment, if rightly understood. The city which hath foundations is built in the soul of man. He in whom Godlike character dwells has all the universe for his own—" All things," saith the apostle, " are yours ; whether life or death, or things present, or things to come ; if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the *promise*." F. W. R.

**8. Lord God.** *Adonai Jehovah :* Adonai is the word which the Jews in reading always substitute for Jehovah. This word often occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and is rendered in our translation Lord ; the same term by which the word Jehovah is expressed. But to distinguish between the two, and to show the reader when the original is *Jehovah*, and when *Adonai*, the first is always put in capitals, LORD, the latter in plain Roman *characters*, Lord. A. C.

**Whereby shall I know?** Not an expression of doubt, but of desire for the confirmation or sealing of a promise which transcended human thought and conception. *Keil.*——Many instances are recorded where God has been graciously pleased to give signs to his people for the confirmation of their faith, when there was not any doubt upon their minds respecting either his faithfulness or power. See Judg. 6 : 14–21, 36–40 ; 2 Kings 20 : 8–11. *Bush.*

**9, 10.** The promise was ratified by a new Covenant, in which Abram stood to God in the relation of the Father of the Faithful, just as Noah, in the covenant made with him, stood for all his race. The forms with which this new covenant was made are minutely related ; and they agree with the customs then observed in covenants between man and man P. S.—— The covenant with Noah was universal and unalterable. It referred to nothing higher than animal life on earth. It secured no moral or spiritual blessing. Quite a new thing happened when God was pleased to covenant for the second time,—not now with all men, but with one man and his posterity ; not by mere promise on His own part, but by promise conditioned by religious trust and obedience on the part of man ; not for the sake of guaranteeing to all men physical existence, but for the sake of securing to faithful men the spiritual blessing of eternal life. *Dykes.*

To confirm his faith Jehovah now gave to Abram a sign and a seal, which yet were such once more only to his faith. He entered into a covenant with him. For this purpose the Lord directed Abram to bring an heifer, a she goat, and a ram, each of three years old, also a turtle-dove and a young pigeon. These sacrifices were to be divided and the pieces laid one against the other, as the custom was in making a covenant, the covenanting parties always passing between them, as it were to show that now there was no longer to be division, but that what had been divided was to be considered as one between them. But here the covenant was made not, as usually, by both parties passing between the divided sacrifice, but by Jehovah alone doing so, since the covenant was that of *grace*, in which one party alone—God—undertook all the obligations, while the other received all the benefits. A. E

**9. Take for me.** An heifer, a goat, a ram, and two doves, Abram was bidden to select when daylight came, and to set apart for a sacrifice *on God's behalf*. In these last words lay the unprecedented feature of this ceremony. Here it is not Abram or any human party, but God Himself, who by this solemn formality binds Himself to the contract. The transaction assumes the shape of a concession on the part of the high celestial Covenanter, in order that the man may " know," as he has petitioned to know, that the word of the Eternal may be absolutely trusted. *Dykes.*

Every animal allowed or commanded to be sacrificed under the Mosaic law, is to be found in this list God was now giving to Abram an *epitome* of that law and its sacrifices, which he intended more fully to reveal to Moses ; the essence of which consisted in its *sacrifices*, which typified the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world. A. C.——The animals are (strikingly enough) all those which were afterward used in the Levitical sacrifices. It was thus a foreshadow of that ritual, as that

was of the gospel system. **Of three years old.** Under the law these animals were generally offered when they were one year old ; but these were, no doubt, required to be of the age of three years, because they were then full grown, in their most perfect state *Bush.*——It has been said that the transaction was not a real sacrifice, as there was no sprinkling of blood nor offering on an altar ; but the essence of the true Hebrew sacrifice was in the slaying of the victim, for the very word (*Zebach*, sacrifice) signifies *slaying*, and it was rather with the *shedding* of blood than with its sprinkling that atonement was made (Heb. 11 : 22). *Cook.*

God himself thus condescended to become Abram's celestial ally, his shield in every peril, and his reward for every sacrifice. It is surely a sublime thought which then for the first time entered into human experience, to color it forever. To be thus lifted into alliance with the Eternal, gives to the soul a lien, a clear, lawful hold, upon Omnipotence, if only the soul will dare, in the enthusiasm or abandonment of a childlike faith, to reckon upon the fidelity of God. When the Most High, out of His own mere mercy, volunteers to bind Himself by a promise for the future, and, having done so, stoops still further to give a pledge for the execution of that promise, then what may fairly be termed a "covenant" is established. Always, in one form or another, God binds Himself to bless the man. He takes the man's side against his foes : or He permits the man to count upon His aid in emergencies : or He pledges Himself to compensate in higher blessings for whatever sacrifice He may meanwhile demand : or He promises inward benefits, as a pacified conscience and a pure heart. *Dykes.*

**13.** Four hundred years and more elapsed while Jacob and his family were in Egypt. Such are the terms of the prediction to Abraham : his seed to be a stranger and a servant in a land that was not theirs for four hundred years. So Stephen quotes the words again in Acts 7 : 6 ; while the four hundred and thirty years mentioned by Paul (Gal. 3 : 17) exactly agree with the statement in Exod. 12 : 40, 41, that such was the length of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt to a day, and are not, therefore, to be understood of the whole interval from Abraham to Moses. In spite, however, of the express assertion of the Book of Exodus, a different chronology is generally followed. For this the Septuagint led the way by rendering Exod. 12 : 40 as follows :—"The sojourning of the sons of Israel, which they sojourned in the land of Egypt (and in the land of Canaan), they and their fathers, was 430 years." But every scholar knows that the authors of the Septuagint had very strange ideas about the duties of translators, and altered the text without scruple whenever they thought they had a reason for it. Here their reason was that they hoped to avoid a difficulty. First it is said that Amram's wife was Jochebed, "a daughter of Levi, whom one bare to Levi in Egypt" (Num. 26 : 59). This, of course, only means that she was a Levite, and the impersonal manner in which the Hebrew says "whom one bare to Levi," is a confirmation of this. Levi plainly is the tribe of Levi, and not the patriarch. Literally understood, it makes Amram not merely marry his aunt, but an aunt of the respectable age of eighty-five at the least ; while it further gives Moses no fewer than 8600 first cousins (Num. 3 : 28). Such are the results of tampering with the text of Scripture. To this we add a second similar reason. The genealogies generally give only four generations in Egypt. Thus—Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses (Ex. 6 : 16–20). So again, Judah, Zerah, Zabdi, Carmi, whose son, Achan, in Joshua's time, stole some of the spoil of Jericho (Josh. 7 : 1). But these genealogies are merely compendiums, in which apparently, as a rule, one name is given for a century. They were legal documents, showing who was the representative of each branch of the families of the high chiefs of pure blood. Fortunately we have one full genealogy of no less a person than Joshua, and we find (1 Chron. 7 : 23-27) that this great prince of Ephraim was the *twelfth* in descent from Joseph. One such genealogy settles the question ; for we can account for the shorter forms, but not for the longer one. In fact, no one who studies the family histories given at the beginning of Chronicles can doubt that they are legal and technical formulæ, representing rank and property, and not necessarily relationship. Nothing is more possible than that names are omitted in the genealogy even of David ; and, in short, the chronology based upon these genealogies is as worthless as that based on Gen. 5. It is using these documents for a purpose for which they never were intended, and no amount of them would weigh against the plain assertion that the Israelites were in Egypt for a period of four hundred and thirty years, and that there were twelve generations between Joseph and Joshua. R. P. S. ——The 400 years is plainly mentioned as a round sum ; it was afterward more precisely and historically defined as 430 (Ex. 12 : 40, 41). From the juxtaposition of the 400 years and the fourth generation in the words to Abraham, the one

must be understood as nearly equivalent to the other, and the period must consequently be regarded as that of the actual residence of the children of Israel in Egypt, from the descent of Jacob—not, as many after the Septuagint, from the time of Abraham. For the shortest genealogies exhibit four generations between that period and the exodus. Looking at the genealogical table of Levi (Ex. 6 : 16 sq.), 120 years might not unfairly be taken as an average lifetime or generation ; so that three of these complete, and a part of the fourth, would easily make 430. In Gal. 3 : 17 the law is spoken of as only 430 years after the covenant with Abraham ; but the apostle merely refers to the known historical period, and regards the first formation of the covenant with Abraham as all one with its final ratification with Jacob. P. F.

**14. And also that nation, etc.** How remarkably was this promise fulfilled, in the redemption of Israel from its bondage, in the plagues and destruction of the Egyptians, and in the immense wealth which the Israelites brought out of Egypt! Not a more circumstantial or literally fulfilled promise is to be found in the sacred writings. A. C.

**15. Go to thy fathers.** This implies that the fathers, though dead, still exist. To *go* from one place to another implies, not annihilation, but the continuance of existence. The doctrine of the soul's perpetual existence is here intimated. Abram died in *peace* and *happiness*, one hundred and fifteen years before the descent into Egypt. M.——The death of Abraham is predicted in one of those remarkable phrases which seem to prove that the Hebrews were not unacquainted with the doctrine of immortality. Here the return of the soul to the eternal abode of the fathers is, with some distinctness, separated from the interment of the body : that both cannot be identical is evident ; for while Abraham was entombed in Canaan, all his forefathers died and were buried in Mesopotamia ; and the reunion of the spirits is in some passages expressed still more clearly by the term being "gathered to the fathers" after the fact of the death itself had been stated, and with a separate allusion to the act of sepulture (ch. 25 : 8, 9 ; 49 : 29, 33 ; Num. 20 : 24, 26 ; 31 : 2). *Kalisch.*

**16. Iniquity of the Amorites.** The Amorites, the most powerful people in Canaan, are here put for the Canaanites in general. Their state of moral corruption is abundantly manifest in the early chapters of Genesis ; and in the divine foreknowledge it was seen that they would add sin to sin, and so at length be destroyed by the divine vengeance. Still the long-suffering of God waited for them, giving time for repentance. *Cook.*——Here is Abram expressly told that, personally, he shall have no part in the enjoyment of the promised blessing, and that he will partake of it only in his descendants. The Amorites, who are here mentioned as being the most distinguished of the Canaanitish nations, are still an object of the Divine mercy : their measure must be first full,—the day of grace must have passed, before God punishes. *Gerl.*——Israel cannot be possessed of Canaan, till the Amorites be dispossessed ; and they are not yet ripe for ruin. The righteous God has determined that they shall not be cut off, till they have persisted in sin so long, and arrived at such a pitch of wickedness, that there may appear some equitable proportion between their sin and their ruin ; and therefore till it come to that, the seed of Abram must be kept out of possession. The measure of sin fills gradually : those that continue impenitent in wicked ways are treasuring up unto themselves wrath. Some people's measure of sin fills slowly. H.

**17. When it was dark, behold a flaming torch.** Abram awoke. The sun had set. Darkness of the starry night, a night without moon, fell upon the slaughtered sacrifices, and the solitary, awe-struck watcher. Then at last came, in the solemn stillness and silence that hushed all the camp, the awful act of ratification. For the first time since man left the gates of Eden, there appeared the glory of God—that luminous symbol of the divine presence with which the children of Abram were afterward to become familiar. What Moses was to witness as a burning but unconsumed bush, and the tribes as a pillar of cloud enwrapping fire, appeared now to Abram as a furnace with red flame at the heart of it, but sending up into the night a dense and lurid column of smoke. In the thick darkness this strange apparition glided along the narrow lane which divided the portions of the sacrifice ; and thus, before the eyes of His human friend and ally, it pleased Jehovah in His condescension to bind Himself forever, as a man does, to the promises of His grace. *Dykes.*

For the first time THE GLORY OF THE LORD (the Shechinah) appears in a symbol similar to that which was afterward seen by Moses in the burning bush, by the Israelites during their passage through the wilderness in the pillar of cloud and of fire, and in the tabernacle in the cloud above the mercy seat. As at a later period it was hid by the bush and by the cloud, so here it appears enveloped in a furnace (of the kind,

more common in the East, shaped like a cylinder, at the upper opening of which fire, enveloped by smoke, bursts forth). It is the symbol of the gracious presence of God.

We read here for the first time of a COVENANT into which God enters with *Abram*. All that had preceded, all the demands, promises, and leadings on the part of God, and all the obedience, faith, self-renunciation, and self-reliance on the part of Abram, were only preliminary steps. But even the covenant *now* made is only partial, and requires completion. It is only partial, inasmuch as God only, and not Abram also, enters into and binds Himself by it. For only God and not Abram passed between the pieces of the sacrifice. By formally and solemnly entering into covenant, God gives Abram a pledge that His promise might be implicitly relied on, and at the same time a token to support his faith. For these purposes it is quite sufficient that God alone ratifies the covenant, nor does He *yet* require Abram solemnly to undertake the covenant obligations devolving on him. It is only afterward, when, on the ground of the engagement which God had in this covenant undertaken, the faith of Abram had become strong, and when the birth of the promised seed was nigh at hand, that giving and asking, on the part of God, go hand in hand, and that He calls upon the patriarch to ratify the covenant by solemnly undertaking its obligations. This takes place in the covenant of circumcision (chap. 17). Hence these two events condition and supplement each other. K.

**18. The river of Egypt.** "Sihor" and "the river of Egypt" are the same. And it appears from Jer. 2 : 18 that Sihor was the Nile. The Hebrew name, "Sihor," signifies "black;" it is an apt epithet of the Nile, bringing down, with its flood, from Abyssinia, a rich, black, loamy sand, which fertilizes the lower Egypt. In the Ethiopian, Egyptian, Greek, and Hindoo languages, the Nile is distinguished by appellations, all of which signify "black." *Hales.*—— From the river of Egypt (the Nile) . . . the river Euphrates. These two streams are here used as representative of the two great world-powers between which Israel should dwell. It is thus a prediction that the descendants of Abram should have an independent existence by the side of these two great empires, and that no nation should have any permanent sway between them and these two empires. So that their dominion may be said to reach from the Euphrates to the Nile. These two rivers are, moreover, constantly referred to in the later Scriptures, as the extreme boundaries of Israel. In its best days, the Israelitish dominion reached, to all intents, to Egypt, since all or nearly all the intervening powers were subject to David and Solomon. *Gosman.*

It is estimated that the Bible contains the names of four thousand persons and places distributed through all the early ages, and over the surface of the whole earth as known to the ancients. Many of these persons and places have not been identified. But whenever a cylinder or tablet has been dug up, bearing one of these perished names, or the site of a buried city has been discovered, in no one instance has the testimony of Scripture been invalidated. We openly challenge and defy the unbeliever to produce, out of all the lands of the Bible, one dead man's name who is a myth, or one old ruin misplaced, aye, one out of the four thousand. In the controversy now waged over what the Bible says of the history, manners, customs and traditions of Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Palestine, Phœnicia, Greece, and Rome, the enemy will be defeated at every turn. He is already fairly driven off the field in Egypt, and wherever he attempts to make a stand over the whole vast region from Thebes to Mosul, the witnesses for the truth will spring up out of the earth and lay siege to his encampment. That entire domain, "from the river of Egypt to that great river, the river Euphrates," was given by covenant to Abraham and his seed for an everlasting possession. We, his spiritual seed, will in due time make good our title to it all; "for the inheritance is ours and the redemption is ours." *E. P. Humphrey.*

*The Old Testament Covenant.*

The chief burden and central thought of the Old Testament is the plan of redemption adopted by Jehovah to be inaugurated and developed by means of a covenant with his own peculiar people. The covenant between Jehovah and his people is the pivot around which all the other thoughts and facts of the Old Testament circle, and in relation to which they find their importance and mission. Manifestly Old Testament theology has no profounder theme than the elucidation of the character and nature of this covenant, and its bearing and influence upon the whole spiritual, religious, and social life of those who lived under it, as also its connection with the covenant of the New Testament as established by Christ.

The notion is not infrequently expressed, and still more frequently implied, that the basis of the Old Testament covenant is Mosaism; or,

in other words, that the principle of righteousness in the old dispensation was a righteousness through the works of the law ; and that the faithful, in order to be just before the Lord within this covenant, would have to earn this distinction by obedience. This view proceeds from the premises that Mosaism is identical with the Old Covenant and the Old Covenant with Mosaism. No error could do greater violence to the essence and spirit of the covenant than this identification. Mosaism is *not* the Old Covenant, nor is the Old Covenant the same as Mosaism. The error of identifying the two is that of making obedience to the law of Mount Sinai the basis of righteousness and justification in the pre-Christian dispensation. Paul (Rom. 4 ; Gal. 3 : 6–14) appeals to the earlier revelation and history of God's kingdom on earth, to prove that the true righteousness before the Lord is the righteousness by faith alone. He adduces the accounts given by the Old Testament of those two men who were undeniably the best representatives of the spirit and character of the covenant between God and Israel, — namely, Abraham, the father of the faithful, and David, the man after God's own heart ; and he shows that, according to these accounts, they were justified before God not on account of any obedience to the laws, but because they had faith in the promises of God. In other words, their righteousness was one of faith, and not one of works. He cites the words of Gen. 15 : 6 as conclusive in Abraham's case ; and he quotes David's own words in Ps. 32 : 1, 2, to show that the great singer of the Old Covenant puts his trust and hope in God alone. The rest of the chapter (Rom. 4) is devoted to an elucidation, on the basis of Old Testament citations, of Abraham's case, and the apostle draws his conclusion in verse 22 : "And therefore it (*i.e.*, his faith) was imputed to him for righteousness." Abraham, then, the historical head, and, as acknowledged by revelation and the author of revelation, the most faithful exponent of the Old Testament covenant, was justified because he had faith in the promises of God. He is, argues Paul on scriptural basis, as is also David, a convincing proof, that, also under the old dispensation, acceptance before God, or, what is the same, righteousness and justification, was based not upon merit or worth, but upon faith and grace alone. Even after the law, he argues in Gal. 3, there were no changes in the covenant relation between God and his people, and all later generations of Abraham's children must be justified before God as was their father Abraham,--namely, by faith in the promises of redemption through Christ. Like all things in God's nature and God's kingdom, the covenant with Abraham was a growth. In chapter 17, which records events at least fourteen years later than those of chapter 15, the second stage of this covenant is depicted and, beside the re-announcement of the fundamental principles of the covenant, its sign, namely circumcision, is revealed to the patriarch, as also the theocratic line of descent established through Isaac, the promised son of Abraham and Sarah. In that chapter (v. 1) Abraham's covenant duty is put in these words, "Walk before me and be thou perfect," an injunction which presupposes and embraces in its compliance the confidence of faith which had been counted to Abraham as righteousness, and expresses rather the outward proof of the inward faith. Naturally this covenant relation is not developed in Abraham's case as it is in the time of the prophets, or under the new dispensation ; but the cardinal principles and truths are there : it is a covenant of faith. The accounts in Genesis show how, in the cases of both Isaac and Jacob, the same covenant with the same conditions continued, with very little, if any, advance beyond the stage it had already reached, externally and internally, in the person of Abraham. As long as the covenant relation was an individual and a family relation its primitive status did not change, nor were the fundamental ideas developed by further revelations. We are not informed by the sacred records that the later patriarchs were further instructed as to the character and nature of this faith in God's providential guidance, nor that any higher theological or ethical truths in this connection were made known to them. *Schodde.*

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The history of the Old Covenant passes, from its commencement to its termination, through *six* stages. In the *first* stage it is only a *family-history.* During that period we are successively made acquainted with each of the three patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob.* The twelve sons of the latter form the basis of the national development. In the *second* stage these *twelve tribes* grow into a *people*, which under *Moses* attains independence and receives its laws and worship. Under *Joshua* it conquers its country, while during the time of the Judges the covenant is to be further developed on the basis of what had already been obtained. The *third* stage commences with the institution of *royalty.* By the side of the royal office, and as a counterpoise and corrective to it, the *prophetical office* is instituted, which is no longer confined to iso-

lated appearances, but remains a continuous *institution*. The separation of the one commonwealth into two monarchies divides this period into two sections. The *fourth* stage comprises the *exile and return*. Prophetism survives the catastrophe of the exile, so as to rearrange and to revive the relations of the people who returned to their country, and to open the way for a further development. The *fifth* stage, *or the time of expectation*, commences with the cessation of prophecy, and is intended to prepare a place for that salvation which is now to be immediately expected. Lastly, the *sixth* stage comprises the time of the *fulfilment*, when salvation is to be exhibited in Christ. The covenant-people reject the salvation so presented, the Old Covenant terminates in judgment against the covenant-people, but prophecy still holds out to them hopes and prospects for the future. K.

# Section 43.

## HAGAR GIVEN TO ABRAM. HER FLIGHT. ANGEL OF JEHOVAH.

GENESIS 16 : 1–16.

1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children : and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian,
2 whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained
me from bearing ; go in, I pray thee, unto my handmaid ; it may be that I shall obtain chil-
3 dren by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took
Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan,
4 and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she
conceived : and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.
5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee : I gave my handmaid into thy bosom ;
and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes : the LORD judge
6 between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand ; do to
her that which is good in thine eyes. And Sarai dealt hardly with her, and she fled from her
7 face. And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the
8 fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, whence camest thou?
9 and whither goest thou? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the
angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.
10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will greatly multiply thy seed, that it shall not be
11 numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with
child, and shalt bear a son ; and thou shalt call his name Ishmael, because the LORD hath
12 heard thy affliction. And he shall be *as* a wild-ass among men ; his hand *shall be* against
every man, and every man's hand against him ; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his
13 brethren. And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou art a God that
14 seeth : for she said, Have I even here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well
15 was called Beer-lahai-roi ; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. And Hagar bare Abram
16 a son : and Abram called the name of his son, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was
fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

**1–3.** We have here the marriage of Abram to Hagar, who was his secondary wife ; herein, though some excuse may be made for him, he cannot be justified ; for *from the beginning it was not so ;* and when it was so, it seems to have proceeded from an irregular desire to build up their families. Christ has reduced this matter to the first institution, and makes the marriage union to be between one man and one woman only. H.——Hagar probably came into Abraham's family during his sojourn in Egypt, and may have been one of the "maid-servants" presented by Pharaoh to the patriarch. Her name "Hagar," *flight*, or *a fugitive*, was one that accrued to her in process of time from the leading event in her history here recorded. Multitudes of similar instances occur in the sacred narrative. Her descendants were called "Hagarites" or "Hagarenes" (1 Chron. 5 : 10), rendered by the Gr. *strangers*. From her, by Ishmael, the

Saracens and Arabs were descended, and the word "Hegira," applied to the *flight* of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, comes from the same root, or "Mohajerin," *fellow-flyers*, the name given by the false prophet to the *companions of his flight*.

**2. The Lord hath restrained me from bearing.** This acknowledgment is almost the only redeeming feature of Sarah's conduct. She owns God's providence in her childless condition, and yet well-nigh destroys the virtue of this confession by making the fact a plea for contriving some other means for the fulfilment of the promise! *Bush.*——"What a lively pattern do I see in Abraham and Sarah, of a strong faith and weak; of strong in Abraham, and weak in Sarah! She, to make God good of his word to Abraham, substitutes a Hagar; and, in an ambition of seed, persuades to polygamy. Abraham had never looked to obtain the promise by any other, if his own wife had not importuned him to take another. When our own apparent means fail, weak faith is put to the shifts, and projects strange devices of her own to attain her end." *Bp. H*——The father of mankind sinned by hearkening to his wife, and now the father of the faithful follows his example. How necessary for those who stand in the nearest relations, to take heed of being snares, instead of helps, to one another! *Fuller.*

**2. Obtain children.** Heb. "*be builded by her.*" A family is called a house, and so to beget children is to build. *Gerl.*——The *possession of children*, by which the house is *built up*, is looked on as a *divine blessing* from Gen. 1 : 28 onward. "From Jehovah" Eve obtains her first son; it is God who in Seth gave her another seed instead of the murdered Abel; it is always God who makes a mother fruitful or unfruitful (29 : 31; 30 : 2), and who will be entreated for the fruit of the body (25 : 21, etc.). Unfruitfulness is a heavy divine dispensation; childlessness is looked upon as the greatest misfortune to a house. Compare also such passages as Ps. 127 : 3; 128 : 3, where a fruitful wife and a group of happy and growing children are designated as the crown of earthly joy. Thus the natural forms of human society are sanctified from the beginning by the religious point of view under which they are placed. O.

**3.** The Hebrew word *pilgash*, here translated "wife," is frequently in other places rendered "concubine." It describes a wife of a second and inferior class. Such women were considered real wives, inasmuch as the connection was legal and customary; but the absence of certain solemnities and contracts of dowry marked the condition as inferior, though not in itself degrading. The children did not inherit the property of the father; who usually provided for them in his own lifetime, if he had sons by the principal wife or wives to claim the inheritance. We thus find Abraham providing for the sons of his concubines Hagar and Keturah. Things are still much the same in the East, where similar practices are legalized by the Mohammedan law. *Pic. Bib.*——In concubinage, these secondary wives were accounted lawful and true wives, and their issue was reputed legitimate; but they were inferior to the chief wife, having no authority in the family, nor any share in household government: so, if they had been servants in the family before they became concubines, they continued to be such afterward, and in the same subjection to their mistresses as before. *Stackhouse.*

With respect to the manifestly imperfect moral standard, which in some cases is displayed in the characters and actions of good men in the Old Testament, it is manifest that had not our Lord himself vouchsafed his help, one of two things must have happened—either that we must have followed the old heresy of rejecting the Old Testament altogether, or else that our respect for the Old Testament must have impeded the growth of the more perfect law of Christ. The true solution I do not think that we could have discovered, or ventured to admit on less authority than our Lord's. But his express declaration, that some things in the law itself were permitted because nothing higher could then have been borne, and his stating in detail that in several points what was accounted good or allowable in the former dispensation was not so really, while at the same time he constantly refers to the Old Testament as divine, and confirms its language of blessing with respect to its most eminent characters, has completely cleared to us the whole question. *T. Arnold.*

The promise of offspring had been made to Abram, and he believed the promise. It had not, however, been distinctly assured to him that Sarai should be the mother of the promised seed. The expedient devised by Sarai was according to a custom still prevalent in the east. Laws concerning marriage had not been so expressly given to the patriarchs as they afterward were. Yet the compliance of Abram with Sarai's suggestion may be considered as a proof of the imperfection of his faith; and it is justly observed, that this departure from the primeval principle of monogamy by Abraham has been

an example followed by his descendants in the line of Ishmael, and has proved, morally and physically, a curse to their race. E. H. B.——God's promises are for Himself to fulfil in His own way, not for us to expedite in ours. The unhasting hope of the husband was a nobler and wiser reply to divine grace than the generous impatience of the wife. Still, Sarai's impulse, even if mistaken, was admirable for its unselfish abnegation of what is most precious to her sex. It was such a sacrifice as only a woman had it in her power to make. To seek by means of a female slave what Providence had denied to herself was regarded as neither immoral nor revolting. It was not even held to be any real departure from the law of monogamy, or any infraction of conjugal fidelity. But in most cases, as in the present instance, it could scarcely fail to turn out ill. Human nature will assert its instincts against whatever violence may be done to it by the artificial arrangements of society. *Dykes.*

**4–6.** We have here the immediate bad consequences of Abram's unhappy marriage to Hagar ; a deal of mischief it made quickly : when we do not well, both sin and trouble lie at the door ; and we may thank ourselves for the guilt and grief that follow us, when we go out of the way of our duty. See it in this story. H.

**4.** The Egyptian Hagar may well have proved a compliant and obeisant maid so long as she was not lifted above her place. But all the woman rose up in her when she believed herself about to become the mother of the desired heir. From the handmaid, she at once aspired to be the rival, of her mistress. *Dykes.*

**5, 6.** As one not willing to hear what Abram had to say for the rectifying of the mistake, and the clearing of himself, she rashly appeals to God in the case, *The Lord judge between me and thee ;* as if Abram had refused to right her. Thus does Sarai, in her passion, speak *as one of the foolish women speaketh.* H.——Abram's ill-judged compliance with the rash counsel of his wife has created an unpleasant state of feeling between him and her ; it constrains him to connive at her cruel treatment of an unhappy woman, who is at least as much to be pitied as blamed ; and renders the prospect of the promised seed a heavy affliction instead of a blessing. Sarah is betrayed by the eagerness of her spirit first into a culpable expedient ; then into unkindness and undutifulness toward her lord ; then into irreverence and impiety toward God ; and finally, by an easy transition, into barbarity toward the hapless handmaid whom her own scheme had brought into a condition that claimed her utmost compassion and kindness. In what deep and accumulated woe, then, may one inconsiderate step involve the heedless ! And if good and well-intentioned people suffer thus severely from one act of imprudence, who but must tremble to think of the fearful consequences of deliberate wickedness ! A thousand volumes written against polygamy would not lead to a clearer, fuller conviction of the evils of that practice, than the story under review. *Bush.*

Sarai's character showed itself under the provocation in a new and unpleasant light. Severe to her slave, she became unjust to her husband. A more magnanimous woman might have spared the sister whom she had herself thrust into a position of difficulty ; but this Chaldean princess was not above showing unhandsome spite where her woman's pride had been touched to the quick. She made the girl's life so bitter, that at last Hagar fairly ran away from her master's encampment, and fled toward her native land of Egypt. *Dykes.*——The custom of the times scarcely warranted such a treatment. But Abram saw and felt it was the only way to domestic peace, and he took it. By Hagar's flight and the manner of her return, the mistress was softened—the maid for the time subdued. W. H.

**7. The angel of Jehovah.** In many passages "the angel of God," "the angel of Jehovah," is a manifestation of God himself. Compare Gen. 22 : 11 with 12, and Ex. 3 : 2 with 6 and 14 ; where the "angel of Jehovah" is called "God" and "Jehovah," and accepts the worship due to God alone. Side by side with these expressions, we read of God's being manifested in the form of *man ;* as to Abram at Mamre, to Jacob at Peniel, to Joshua at Gilgal. Apparently both sets of passages refer to the same kind of manifestation of the Divine Presence. Now, since "no man hath seen God" (the Father) "at any time," and "the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed Him," the "Angel of the Lord" in such passages must be He, who is from the beginning the "Word," *i.e.* the Manifester or Revealer of God, and these appearances must be "foreshadowings of the Incarnation." *Barry.*——[Read "The Theophanies," etc. at the close of this Section. Also note Sect. 49, v. 17.]

**8. Hagar, Sarai's maid.** This mode of address is used to show her that she was *known ;* and to remind her, that she was the *property* of *another.* A. C.——**9. Submit thyself.** Sub

mission itself, though so hard, may be so accepted as to become useful in the mellowing and strengthening of character. The angel advised *submission*, and this is the first instance in which such advice is given in the Scriptures. It is a great Christian law, but it is early to find it in Genesis! "Submit yourselves one to another for the Lord's sake," is a lesson which Hagar heard "by a fountain of water in the wilderness" J. P.

**10. Multiply thy seed.** We find in Gen. 25 a list of twelve princes, with their towns and castles. And in the 37th chapter we find the Ishmaelites already a great trading people. Afterward we find several multitudinous peoples mentioned among his descendants, as the Hagarenes, named from his mother Hagar; the Itureans, from his son Itur; the Nabatheans, from his son Nebaioth. And so onward in later times Strabo makes frequent mention of the Arabian *phylarchs* or rulers of tribes. And to this day they live and are ruled by tribes, and have continued as the Saracens and other Arabic peoples a great nation, almost as distinct as the Jews among the nations of the earth. Perhaps the Jews and the Arabs are the only peoples on earth who can trace back their pedigree for nearly 4000 years. S. R.

**11.** *Ishmael* signifies "God hears." The first of the seven persons whose names are announced before their birth. The others were—Isaac, Solomon, Josiah, Cyrus, John, and Jesus. C. G. B.——For, says the Angel, *the Lord hath heard thy affliction.* Thus the name of the child must ever keep the mother in remembrance of God's merciful interposition in her behalf; and remind the *child* and the *man* that he was an object of God's gracious and providential goodness. Afflictions and distresses have a voice in the ears of God, even when prayer is restrained—but how much more powerfully do they speak when endured in meekness of spirit, with confidence in, and supplication to the Lord! A. C.

**12.** It is in the original *a wild ass-man;* meaning as wild as a wild ass: so that that should be eminently true of him which is affirmed of mankind in general, "Man is born like a wild ass's colt" (Job 11 : 12). The nature of the creature to which Ishmael is compared cannot be described better than in the same book (chap. 39 : 5, etc.), according to which Ishmael and his posterity were to be wild, fierce, savage, ranging the deserts, and not easily softened and tamed to society. And whoever hath read or known anything of this people, knoweth this to be their true and genuine character. **His hand will be against every man.** The one is the natural and almost necessary consequence of the other. Ishmael lived by prey and rapine in the wilderness; and his posterity have all along infested Arabia and the neighboring countries with their robberies and incursions. They live in a state of continual war with the rest of the world; and are both robbers by land and pirates by sea. *Bp. Newton.*

**Every man's hand against him.** Many potentates among the Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, have endeavored to subjugate the wandering or wild Arabs; but though they have had temporary triumphs, they have been ultimately unsuccessful. *Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey,* and *Trajan,* all endeavored to conquer Arabia, but in vain. From the beginning, to the present day, they have maintained their independency; and God preserves them as a lasting monument of his providential care, and an incontestable argument of *the truth of Divine Revelation.* Had the Pentateuch no other argument to evince its divine origin, the account of *Ishmael* and the prophecy concerning his *descendants*, collated with their history and manner of life, during a period of nearly *four thousand years*, is an absolutely demonstrable argument. The country which these free descendants of Ishmael may be properly said to possess, stretches from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea; and from Egypt to the Persian gulf. A tract of land not less than 1800 miles in length by 900 in breadth. A. C.

**And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.** Shall *tabernacle;* for many of the Arabs dwell in tents, and are, therefore, called *Scenites*, from a Greek word, signifying a tent. They dwelt in tents in the wilderness as long ago as Isaiah's and Jeremiah's time (Is. 13 : 20; Jer. 3 : 2), and they do the same at this day. This is very extraordinary, that "his hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him;" and yet that he should be able to "dwell in the presence of all his brethren;" but, extraordinary as it was, this also hath been accomplished both in the person of Ishmael and in his posterity. As for Ishmael *himself*, the sacred historian afterward relates (chap. 25 : 17, 18) that "the years of the life of Ishmael were an hundred and thirty and seven years, and he died in the presence of all his brethren." As for his *posterity*, they dwelt likewise in the presence of all their brethren; Abraham's sons by Keturah; the Moabites and Ammonites, descendants of Lot; the Israelites, descendants of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob ; and the Edomites, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Esau. They still subsist a distinct people, and inhabit the country of their progenitors ; they have from first to last maintained their independency ; and, notwithstanding the most powerful efforts for their destruction, still dwell in the presence of all their brethren, and in the presence of all their enemies. *Bp. Newton.*

From Havilah to Shur you behold him to-day, as roving and untamed as the wild ass, and dwelling in the presence of his brethren. "Until to-day the Ishmaelites are in undisturbed, free possession of the great peninsula lying between the Euphrates, the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea, from whence they have spread over wide districts in Northern Africa and Southern Asia" (*Delitzsch*). Ishmael has also become, according to this prophetic utterance, a great nation, and more than "twelve princes" have sprung from his stock. "Every addition to our knowledge of Arabia and its inhabitants," says Kalisch, "confirms more strongly the Biblical statements. While they have carried their arms beyond their native lands, and ascended more than one hundred thrones, they were never subjected to the Persian empire. The Assyrian and Babylonian kings had a transitory power over small portions of their tribes. Here the ambition of Alexander the Great and his successors received an insuperable check, and a Roman expedition in the time of Augustus totally failed. The Bedouins have remained essentially unaltered since the times of the Hebrews and the Greeks." Is it not one hundred and twenty millions that speak the Arabic tongue to-day? S. C. B.——This prophecy has photographed a national character which, for more than three thousand years, has continued unchanged. In all ages, historians have described the Bedouin Arab as a "wild man," or *wild ass man* ; as roving, predatory, engaged in ceaseless feuds with his neighbors, reckless of the milder restraints of civilization, and setting at defiance those international laws which regulate the intercourse of surrounding nations. The Ishmaelites or Arabians have ever held fast by the same country. Anchored in one land, they have swung over surrounding communities, only to settle, at last, in their own appointed territory, and to retain precisely the same characteristics. The "wildness," which in other tribes and nations has been first softened, then effaced, has, in their features, never been even lessened by the lapse of ages. Not dispersed by conquest, nor wasted by migration, they dwell still "in the presence of all their brethren," a strange national spectacle, utterly inexplicable by those laws which regulate other races. Comparatively fugitive and unstable as are the general characteristics of nations while the influences of centuries sweep over them as tidal waves on the shore, the Ishmaelites remain the same as when this strangely-expressed prophecy was first uttered by the angel of the Lord. The more powerful national influences, the attractions of fairer lands, and the luxury of indolent races, utterly failed to change in the least their characteristic features, during that splendid period when their empire extended from the borders of India to the Atlantic. Through all they stood forth a perpetual representation of the facts predicted in their history, and their present condition harmonizes with that of many ages ago. *W. Frazer.*

Again and again have they been hunted down by invading armies ; but neither the Macedonian, nor the Roman, nor the Turk has been able to establish a settled rule over their inaccessible and inhospitable wastes. Again and again have their predatory hordes swept over adjacent states ; but neither have they been willing to exchange the free air of the desert for the restraints of a settled community. Broken up forever into petty tribes at endless feud with one another, the words of prophecy have actually grown into a proverb of their own : "In the desert," say the Bedouin, "every one is the enemy of every one else!" Most unchangeable of races, they dwell where they have always dwelt, "in the presence of all their brethren," stable in their instability, while empire has succeeded empire, and civilization has grown upon the ruins of preceding civilizations. With characteristic fidelity have their own unwritten traditions handed down the memory of their boasted descent from the "father of multitudes," through him whose birth was announced by the angel at the fountain. *Dykes.*

**13.** This Jehovah, Whom she knew as her master's friend, was, as she now confessed, a "God of vision :" One Who could see, and could be seen. Not only had He seen her, a lonely fugitive by the desert well, far from the tents of men, but He permitted Himself to be seen of her in grace. Not only could He foresee the birth that was to be, with all its hidden issues in the long hereafter, but He could reveal to mortals what only the immortals know. Impressed by this discovery of God,—to her an unknown God till now —she conferred upon Jehovah a new name. "Thou art," said she, "the God of seeing," with the double sense underlying the words. For she said : "Here have

I also seen, even after seeing Him !" To have beheld the self-revealing God, and yet live—this made to her mind the marvel of that hour. In after days the fountain is said to have received its name in recollection of the woman's words. *Dykes.*

**14. Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi.** That is, the well of the living that saw God. *Medd.*——"Well of the seeing to life;" *i.e.*, a well, where man sees God and yet lives, and then at the same time is looked on by Him with grace, and blessed. Cf. ch. 32 : 30 : "P'ni el," a place where one sees God's countenance and the soul is preserved. *Gerl.*——*She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her*, that is, thus she made confession of his name, this she said to his praise, *Thou God seest me:* this should be with her his name forever, and this his memorial by which she will know him and remember him while she lives, *Thou God seest me.* The God with whom we have to do is a seeing God, an all-seeing God. *God is* (as the ancients expressed it) *all eye.* We ought to acknowledge this with application to ourselves. He that sees all, sees me. H.

The Christian does not think of God as a spy upon his actions, or resent the doctrine of His omnipresence as intrusive inquisitiveness, but he delights in the assurance that the Lord is by his side. The words, "Thou God seest me," so often used as if they were a warning to the sinner, were first employed by Hagar as an expression of her gratitude for the appearance of God to her by the fountain on the way to Shur. They are not, therefore, expressive of alarm, but rather of delight ; and every true believer can appropriate them in that sense. For the Lord is as near to those who love Him now as He was then to Hagar ; and if we could only remember that, we should be delivered from despondency and encouraged to stand fast before all our spiritual adversaries. The child is not afraid to venture even in the darkest night when his father is by his side ; and if we but realized that God is at our right hand, we should never be moved. For there is no help so available to us as His. With the speed of thought we may communicate with Him. With unspoken ejaculation we have but to lift our hearts to Him, and He will respond. To whom, then, are we so near as we are to Him? He is to those who love Him a constant companion, friend and protector, One with whom I can enjoy the sweetest fellowship, and from whom I may receive the richest blessings. W. M. T.

God knows the thoughts which are incessantly streaming through every intellect, the lights and shadows that chase each other over every heart. Every corroding care, every restless anxiety, every glad hope, every pleasant remembrance, every half-formed purpose to do a just or kindly act, or to leave an acknowledged duty undischarged, every scheme of selfishness, every malignant impulse, all are known to him. If there were no angels for him to think of, if some dreadful pestilence suddenly swept away the whole human race except yourself, and left you and God absolutely alone in the universe, he would not know you more perfectly, or think of you more constantly than he does now. If there is something terrible in this, there is something inspiring and animating in it, too. If it makes us tremble when we think of our secret faults and sins, since he knows and remembers them all, it should give courage and energy to the attempt to live a life that God can approve and honor. We may have little to show for efforts which cost us much, but God knows what the efforts are. We may be baffled and defeated again and again, but God sees the heroic uprising of the soul after every disappointment and failure. The best we can do may attract no attention, win no praise ; but if it *is* our best, God knows it, and he asks for nothing more. *Dale.*

*The Theophanies, or Manifestations of Jehovah*

The sixteenth chapter of Genesis introduces to us One Who, there and in many other places of the Bible, is pre-eminently entitled *The Angel of the* LORD. The unique grandeur of this Personage is distinctly marked in every instance in the Sacred Text. Dr. Pusey, speaking on this point, says, "Whether it were God the Son Who so manifested Himself beforehand—as was the common belief of the earliest fathers—His Godhead invisible, as in the days of His flesh, or no, yet there was one known as the Angel of the LORD, distinct from and above all the rest." He stands everywhere alone and unapproachable. There is but one so called ; just as there is also but one in the Holy Scriptures who is called *the Devil*, the *Satan*, the *Adversary*. Further, in every place where *the Angel of the* LORD is introduced His divine character and dignity are also most clearly intimated. Who can this be but the Son of God, the Word of the Father? *Medd.*

Throughout the whole of Old Testament there runs the distinction between the hidden God and the Revealer of God, Himself equal with God, who most frequently is called "the Messenger, the Angel of the Lord," "Malachi-Jehovah,"—one with Him, and yet distinct

from Him. This Messenger of the Lord is the Guide of the patriarchs ; the Caller of Moses ; the Leader of the people through the wilderness ; the Champion of the Israelites in Canaan ; and also, yet further, the Guide and Ruler of the people of the covenant ; or, as He is called (Isa. 63 : 9), "the Angel of His Presence ;" by Malachi, as the Messenger of the Covenant, greatly longed for by the people, whose return to His temple is promised. It nowhere occurs in the Old Testament, that an angel speaks as if he were God (since Gabriel (Dan. 10) and the angel who talks with Zechariah (1 : 2) clearly distinguish themselves from Jehovah) ; while this Angel of the Lord, in the passage under consideration, and often elsewhere in the Old Testament, speaks as Jehovah, and His appearing is regarded as that of the Most High God Himself. Nay, God says expressly of this Angel, "My name—*i.e.*, My revealed Being—is in Him." His name "Messenger," or "Angel," is to be taken in a general signification, and by no means as if it denoted a class of higher created beings. In the New Testament the expressions, "The Word," "Son," "Express Image," "Brightness," betoken the same, viz., the countenance turned to man, the Revealer of the invisible God. The future appearance on earth of the God-man is gradually prepared in the Old Testament in two ways : on the one hand, there is promised a mighty and glorious human Ruler over all (in later times called "Messiah,"—the Anointed of the Lord), to whom at the same time in His human nature, Divine names, attributes and works are ascribed ; on the other hand, the personal distinction in the Godhead, the Revealer of the invisible God as a separate person, is more and more clearly made known. *Geri.*

We read in the Patriarchal history of various appearances of Angels so remarkable that we can scarcely hesitate to suppose them to be gracious visions of the Eternal Son. For instance : it is said that "the Angel of the Lord appeared unto" Moses "in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush ;" yet presently this supernatural Presence is called "the Lord," and afterward reveals His name to Moses, as "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." On the other hand, Stephen speaks of Him as "the Angel which appeared to Moses in the bush." Again he says soon after that Moses was "in the Church in the Wilderness with the Angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai ;" yet in the Book of Exodus we read, "Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain ;" "God spake all these words, saying," and the like. Now, assuming, as we seem to have reason to assume, that the Son of God is herein revealed to us, as graciously ministering to the Patriarchs, Moses and others, in angelic form, the question arises, What was the nature of the appearance? We are not informed, nor may we venture to determine ; still anyhow, the Angel was but the temporary outward form which the Eternal Word assumed. *Newman.*

There is no abstract common angelic nature. Each angel is, from his first creation, perfect in his own personality, from which it follows that the Son of God could not have taken the angelic nature without superseding, indeed annihilating, the personality of some one particular angel ; and the sin of the evil angels, who might seem to satisfy the condition of necessity, is irremediable. *Thomas Aquinas.*

Nor is the office itself of an angel or announcer of the Father's will unbecoming Him. In a word, God the Father could not have become an angel consistently with His prerogative as Father ; for then He would have been sent by another, Who yet is indebted for His authority to no one. To the Son of God, however, both the name of God altogether belongs, as being most true God ; and also the appellation of Angel, forasmuch as He is in such wise very God, as to be God of God, and was, therefore, capable of receiving and undertaking, consistently with the dignity of his person, the mission and dispensation committed to him by God, of whom he is. *Bp. Bull.*

The New Testament distinguishes between the hidden God and the revealed God—the Son or Logos—connected with the former by oneness of nature, who from everlasting, and even at the creation itself, filled up the immeasurable distance between the Creator and the creation,—Who has been the Mediator in all God's relations to the world,—Who at all times, and even before he became man in Christ, has been the light of the world, and to whom, specially, was committed the direction of the economy of the old covenant. It is evident that this doctrine stands in the closest connection with the Christology,—that it forms indeed its theological foundation and groundwork. . . . The question then is, Whether any insight into this doctrine is to be found as early as in the Books of the Old Testament. Sound Christian Theology has discovered the outlines of such a distinction between the hidden and the revealed God, in many passages of the Old Testament, in which mention is made of an Angel or Messenger of God. *Hengstenberg* (*Christology of the Old Testament*).

Whatever line of interpretation be adopted with respect to the Theophanies, no sincere believer in the historical trustworthiness of Holy Scripture can mistake the importance of their relation to the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. Do they not point in any case to a purpose in the Divine mind which would only be realized when man had been admitted to a nearer and more palpable contact with God than was possible under the Patriarchal or Jewish dispensations? Do they not suggest, as their natural climax and explanation, some personal self-unveiling of God before the eyes of his creatures? Would not God appear to have been training his people, by this long and mysterious series of communications, at length to recognize and to worship him when hidden under and indissolubly one with a created nature? Considering them as a series of phenomena, is there any other account of them so much in harmony with the general scope of Holy Scripture as that they were successive lessons addressed to the eye and to the ear of ancient piety, in anticipation of a coming Incarnation of God? H. P. L.

It remains, then, that the grand initial oracle of Revelation is the true key to this mysterious appellation, "the Angel of the Lord"—namely, the plurality of persons in the Divine Nature, the very *unity* of which not only admits but requires such distinctions as this appellation implies. Their essential relations as *Triune* give rise to an order of agency and outgoing strictly conformable to, and in effect, expository of them, since all things are designed to manifest God to His creatures, and to glorify Him *as He is*. Hence, we can understand how the term Angel as well as the term Word may distinguish a person truly God, though these cannot be applicable to each person of the Godhead indiscriminately. He whose Angel this divine Person is must be supreme on the ground of *personal priority* to Him who is His Angel; and this order, therefore, cannot be arbitrary and invertible. This fact becomes fully manifest when the New Testament statements on this point are applied to elucidate the more vague and general statements of the Old. In them, *personal relations* are brought out, not only as consistent with the Unity, but as of its very essence. This shows us why the term Angel is used to denote the *Mediating Deity:* it belongs to Him as "the head of all principality and power." He is the Angel or Envoy, who is not only the head of a whole host of these "ministering spirits," but in a very peculiar sense the *Minister of God on behalf of the world.* It is His ministry that gives rise to every other, and that ordains and sets all these in motion. It is the vinculum or bond between "Him whom no man hath seen, nor can see," and the creatures made like Him, and to be restored to Him, by Him who is "become one of us." Thus, we see that Angel implies the position of a Mediator and all the prerogatives and works proper to Him, while it has this advantage over the term Word, that it is more strongly *personal.* It cannot be resolved into personification. It is also worth notice, that the passage in which the first mention occurs of "the angel of the Lord" is in the chapter immediately following the one opening with the first mention of the "Word of the Lord" in a sense undoubtedly personal, as if this collation of the terms Word and Angel were meant to form together *an outset in the career of mediatorial personality, which from this point onward acquires increasing variety and fulness of expression;* while the evidence before adduced is in proof that the functions any more than the office of the Mediator did not take date from this point, but connected the manifestations now referred to with the earliest times. It is but distinct *personal development* that now occurs; a fact which supposes *official* pre-existence just as certainly as it does a personal one, and in entire keeping with the *germinant* principle inherent in all the divine counsels and works, of which the history of Creation itself supplies a great example. *Steward* (*Mediatorial Sovereignty*).

Thus we trace throughout the volume of the Old Testament the gracious intervention, from time to time, of the Son of God, the one Mediator, in the character of *The Angel of the* LORD, sent by the Father, and seen in human form by man, in waking life and in vision, in significant preparation for His permanent Incarnation. This great Presence, so clearly apprehended by the earlier Christian writers and Apologists, and, in later times, so largely admitted by the great majority of orthodox reformed, and especially English, biblical writers, lights up the whole previous Dispensation with a wonderful anticipation of the glorious future Gospel. It binds together, as nothing else does, the Old Testament in a compact unity with the New, giving a special strength and consistency to the great Revelation contained in the two. Read in the light of this bond of coherence, the great saying of Saint Augustine receives additional force and meaning, *Novum Testamentum in veteri latet; Vetus Testamentum in novo patet;* and, taking *prophecy* in its widest, truest sense, *i.e.* for the whole inspired utterance of the whole Bible as a historic Revelation, it is seen clearly that its *spirit*, its whole inner meaning and aim,

is *the bearing witness to Jesus, the Same* in the *yesterday* of the Old Covenant, as in the *to-day* of the New. *Medd.*

*Views of ancient and modern writers.* That the Angel of the Lord is the Logos of John, who is connected with the supreme God by unity of nature, but personally distinct from him, was, if we except Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great, the *universal doctrine of the Early Church.* The Fathers of the first Synod in Antioch (A.D. 269), in a letter sent to Paul of Samosata before his deposition, affirm that "the Angel of the Father, being himself Lord and God," appeared to Abraham and to Jacob, and to Moses in the burning bush. *Hengstenberg.* ——Two principal opponents of this view among the German biblical writers, Hofmann and Delitzsch, maintain *the Angel of the Lord* to be a created angel. Kurtz at first agreed with Hengstenberg, but afterward adopted the view of Hofmann and Delitzsch. Among later English writers the view maintained in these pages is held by Dr. Gordon, *Christ as made known to the Ancient Church* (Edinburgh, 1854); Canon Barry, Article *Angel*, in Smith's Bible Dictionary, 1860; Macdonald, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, 1861; Steward, *Mediatorial Sovereignty*, 1863; Dr. Walsh, Bishop of Ossory, in his very interesting work, *The Angel of the Lord*, or *Manifestations of Christ in the Old Testament* (Seeley, 1876); and the *Speaker's Commentary*; also by the Danish Bishop of Seeland, Dr. H. Martensen, in his *Christian Dogmatics*, 1866. *Medd.*

[Read note in Sect. 49, verse 17, for full outline of arguments on either side.]

# Section 44.

## COVENANT RENEWED. SEALED BY CIRCUMCISION.

GENESIS 17 : 1–27.

1 AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said
2 unto him, I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my
3 covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his
4 face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and
5 thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called
Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made
6 thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings
7 shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed
after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and
8 to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy
sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.
9 And God said unto Abraham, And as for thee, thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy
10 seed after thee throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep,
between me and you and thy seed after thee; every male among you shall be circumcised.
11 And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a
12 covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you,
every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money
13 of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is
bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh
14 for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the
flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.
15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but
16 Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and moreover I will give thee a son of her:
yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of* nations; kings of peoples shall be of her.
17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born
18 unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And
19 Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Nay, but
Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish

20 my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael,
I have heard thee : behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply
21 him exceedingly ; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my
covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the
22 next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. And Abraham
23 took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his
money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their
24 foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old
25 and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was
26 thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day
27 was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, those born
in the house, and those bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

**1.** A second time God appeared, to repeat His promises with greater explicitness than before, and to seal by a sacramental symbol His servant's adhesion to the covenant. In substance, the earlier promises to which God had bound Himself by the night ceremony thirteen years before were reiterated on this second occasion. But they were reiterated with an amplitude and completeness which had never been approached.

**I am God Almighty.** By this time, a child of their marriage was become, according to the usual laws of life, a physical impossibility. It is no wonder that, when God designed to demand of His aged servants faith in so improbable an announcement, He should have prefaced the oracle by proclaiming as His new name El Shaddai—God the Almighty one. For the only key that will unlock such a difficulty as this—it is in effect the standing difficulty of our age, the presence of the supernatural among the sequences of nature—lies in these words of a greater than Abraham : "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." "Is anything too hard for Jehovah," if the Jehovah Who is Abraham's God be indeed El Shaddai, the all-powerful Maker and Lord of nature, the quickener of all things, Who vivifies the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they were?

**Walk before me, and be thou perfect.** God had chosen Abraham to be His friend. If Abraham accept such a lofty title, he must walk in friendship with God. Jehovah had pledged Himself to be the God of Abraham. If Abraham receive such a pledge, he must faithfully own and serve Jehovah as his God. A loyal, obedient, worshipful attitude toward this gracious Covenanter is implied in the very act of becoming a party to His covenant. Before the details of the divine engagement fall to be recited, the interview is prefaced by these words, which must be viewed as a summary of the whole in its outstanding lines : "I am El Shaddai : walk before me and be perfect, and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." To "walk before the face or presence of God," meant to order his daily life and behavior according to His will, so as to retain His friendly approval. To be "perfect" in this holy bond of amity meant to adhere to it with an undivided loyalty to the service of Jehovah Shaddai. *Dykes.*

The words seem to imply that the realization of the Divine Presence in all things is the great secret of perfection ; that is, of such perfection as man can by grace attain unto. But how shall we obtain an habitual assurance of a truth whereof our senses give us no notice whatever? —how shall we walk before God, as seeing Him who is invisible? In the same way by which all other results in the spiritual life are obtained, —by trustful, expectant, sanguine prayer, and effort. It is obvious that this very grace—mindfulness or consciousness of God's presence—may be made the subject of special prayer, an answer to which, as in the case of every spiritual blessing which we petition for, should be looked for with confidence, on the ground of God's promise to prayer. But then there is, besides this, the doing what in us lies to attain the end. And what in us lies is this,—to call the attention definitely to God's presence, as occasion offers, at the necessary breaks or periods in our work, and the occasional mingling with the act of recollection two or three words of secret prayer which may suggest themselves on the moment. And it will be found in course of time, that the constant recurrence of the thoughts to God will pass into an instinctive consciousness of His presence and that the mind will acquire a tendency to gravitate toward Him at all times, which will operate easily and naturally as soon as it is relieved of the strain which worldly affairs put upon it. E. M. G.

Communion with God consists chiefly in an

ordering our ways as in the presence of Him that is invisible. This would make us spiritual, careful and watchful in all our passions, if we considered that God is present with us as with the angels in heaven ; who though they have a presence of glory above us, yet have not a greater measure of His essential presence than we have. If God should appear visibly to us when we were alone, should we not be reverent and serious before Him? God is everywhere about us, He doth encompass us with His presence ; should not God's seeing have the same influence upon us as our seeing God? He is not more essentially present if He should so manifest Himself to us than when He doth not. We could not seriously think of His presence, but there would pass some intercourse between us ; we should be putting up some petition upon the sense of our indigence, or sending up our praises to Him upon the sense of His bounty. The actual thought of the presence of God is the life and spirit of all religion ; we could not have sluggish spirits and a careless watch if we considered that His eye is upon us all day. *Charnock.*

*Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, that is, upright and sincere ; for herein the covenant of grace is well ordered, that sincerity is our gospel perfection. To be religious is to walk before God in our integrity ; it is to set God always before us, and to think and speak and act in everything, as those that are always under his eye. It is to have a constant regard to his word as our rule, and to his glory as our end, in all our actions, and to be continually in his fear. It is to be *inward with him*, in all the duties of religious worship, for in them particularly we walk before God, and to be *entire for him*, in all holy conversation. Upright walking with God, is the condition of our interest in his all-sufficiency. If we neglect him, or dissemble with him, we forfeit the benefit and comfort of our relation to him. A continual regard to God's all-sufficiency will have a great influence upon our upright walking with him. H.

Those who profess to believe in him must not live as *they* list, but as *he* pleases. Though redeemed from the curse of the law and from the rites and ceremonies of the *Jewish church*, they are *under the law to Christ*, and *must walk before him*—be in all things obedient to that *moral* law, which is an emanation from the righteousness of God and of eternal obligation ; and let it ever be remembered, that Christ is *the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.* Without faith and obedience, there can be no holiness ; and without holiness, none can see the Lord. Be all that God would have thee to be, and God will be to thee all that thou canst possibly require He never gives a precept, but he offers sufficient grace to enable thee to perform it. Believe as he would have thee, and act as he shall strengthen thee ; and thou wilt then believe all things *savingly*, and do all things *well.* A. C.

**4-6.** A most numerous and wide branching posterity was secured by the contract. Already it had been again and again promised—first in Haran, next at Bethel, and last at Mamre. The fullest expression was now given to it in these words : "Thou shalt be a father of many nations." *Dykes.*——Mark the increase and graduation of the divine promise. The seal to it is the new name, "Abraham,"—that is, father of a multitude (of nations). Even from Ishmael sprung a great people. The Edomites spread themselves abroad. Numerous families came from Keturah. From Jacob the twelve tribes and their descendants derived their origin, with all the numerous Abrahamidæ who, during eighteen centuries, have been incorporated into the Christian Church ; and besides these, the spiritual Israel, to which the nations converted from heathenism to Christ also belong.—"And kings :" Saul and David, and their successors for centuries. Above all, we must not forget *him* who has said, "*My kingdom is not of this world.*" C. G. B.——To be called "Father of a multitude" was not a reward attached to his confidence in the divine assurances, so much as a gracious attestation and memorial of them. It made it easier, so to say, to keep alive his confidence in the future, when the very name by which other men addressed him was itself a standing pledge of that future, given from Heaven.

**7.** Thus ran the wonderful words: "*I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*" Here lay the heart and kernel of the whole. It is the heart of all the deepest experiences of the saints, from that day to this. It is the "blessing" which wraps up within it every other divine benefit, and makes our earthly boons to be blessings indeed. That God did bind Himself to act as God—their God—toward this man and his posterity ; to bless them ; to make them channels of blessing for mankind ; to be all and do all for their advantage that a friendly, propitious God can do or be for His fallen human children ;—here was the magnificent and quite inexhaustible treasure of this amazing treaty. *Dykes.*

The promise to be a God to him and his seed could not have meant simply a covenant for his personal salvation ; for this had been assured to him before when " he believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Nor can it mean to be a covenant of natural blessings to his natural descendants, for in the covenant are included the household, embracing servants and all ; while, on the other hand, many of his descendants, as the families of Ishmael and Esau, had no birthright in this covenant. The Apostle Paul expresses it fully by declaring that in this covenant Abraham was " the heir of the world," and the representative of all who in all ages after should exercise the faith of Abraham. If so, then the covenant to be their God and to make them a blessing indicates a purpose specially to dwell among, and manifest himself to, this peculiar body, and, through it, to manifest his grace to the nations. In short, here are all the elements of a definition of the visible Church ; and this is the beginning of that peculiar society as a separate visible body on earth. Nor is this charter ever to be annulled. It is "an everlasting covenant." And though the term everlasting may, at times, be used in a limited sense, such cannot be the case here ; for its blessings are to reach to all generations of him who is the representative father of the faithful. Under this charter Moses may develop the theocratic commonwealth, and David the theocratic kingdom, and these may pass away again—but still the covenant charter is not annulled. Just as, under the covenant of grace, the great fact of justification by faith may be exhibited, now in the simple sacrifices of Adam or Abel or Noah, or now in the elaborate ritual of Moses, or now in the simple ordinances of the New Testament, without thereby annulling or even impairing that covenant ; so in the case of this great charter covenant of the Church. This covenant with Abraham is, therefore, the divine charter of the visible Church as heretofore and still existing. There is no other charter found in Scripture. Paul, in Rom. 3 : 29 and 4 : 11–17, and in Gal. 3 : 7–9, expressly declares that the New Testament Church of believers is the true successor to the covenant with Abraham. S. R.

The wonderful argument in Gal. 3 : 16–29 proves the identity of the system of grace in the Old Testament and the New. The gospel is, in reality, older than the law. When Jehovah entered into a covenant with Abraham to bless all nations in his seed, that promise looked forward to Christ. Between the giving of the promise and its fulfilment, the law came in as a means of training and discipline. It was our schoolmaster, or, more exactly, our *pedagogue*,—the name given to a guardian who every day led the child to the teacher, and kept him under proper restraint in going and coming So the law led to Christ ; and this in two ways : its commands caused men to realize the failure of self-made righteousness, of attempts at character ; and its sacrifices fixed in the human mind and in human speech the idea of an atonement. With the coming of Christ, the Jewish system, with all that was local or national or typical in it, passed away ; but the original platform of the gospel remained. J. P. T.——To this hour there is for none of us any standing more secure or blessed. That covenant with Abraham is in essence the new covenant of our peace, which has been sealed by the blood of Abraham's seed. *Dykes.*

**10–14.** The covenant of circumcision, which was made with Abraham after the birth of Ishmael, and the change which took place in his name, brought out with a quite new force the truths which he had been gradually apprehending before. That covenant, like the covenant with Noah, was one not of bargain, but of blessing. It was an assurance, that he who entered into it was called, chosen, set apart by God. He had not taken up the position himself ; his business was simply to acknowledge that it was his, and to act as if it were. But, unlike the former covenant, man was to make the sign ; the sign was a perpetual indication to him that he must give up his own natural inclinations if he would be a true man according to God's call and purpose. It taught Abraham a truth about himself which the rainbow could not teach him. Yet he only acquired this wisdom through an ordinance which concerned every member of his household, and all who were to come after him, as much as it concerned him. *Maurice.*

**And thou.** On the earlier occasion (13 years before, Gen. 15) it was the Divine Party in the covenant Who, as the gracious originator of it, bound Himself to its observance by a solemn ceremony,—the passage of the glory between the sacrifices. Now it was His human friend, elevated to the dignity of a covenanter with God, who was called upon to accept his share of obligation, and bind himself to its performance by a parallel ceremony—the symbolic rite of circumcision. It has to be noted with care, that not until the promises of God had all been for a long while accepted by the tacit faith of the patriarch, did he receive any command touching circumcision. To this order in the events Paul calls attention as significant (Rom.

4 : 9). Faith precedes the sacramental seal; and the man s acceptance in God's sight as His covenanted friend hangs upon his *faith*, and is synchronous with that, not with his circumcision. The sign which attested on man's side his adhesion to the alliance and his acceptance of the blessing, was no more than "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." It is the uniform order of the divine dealings with fallen man. Grace comes first; for God must volunteer the blessing which through sin we have forfeited. *Dykes.*

**11. Token of a covenant.** All theocratic ordinances are in general *signs* and *pledges* of the covenant relation. But the main sign of the covenant is *circumcision*, which is the constant symbol of covenant obligations, and of consequent covenant rights. O.——Its first and most obvious design was to serve as a *sign* of the covenant into which the posterity of Abraham were, in the person of their father, to enter; or in other words, to fix upon the persons of all his natural descendants a distinguishing mark, separating them from the rest of the world and denoting their peculiar relation to the true God. There are expressions of Scripture which show that this rite imported the highest degree of sanctification and holiness. Moses repeatedly speaks of the "circumcising of the heart to love the Lord with all our heart and all our soul" (Deut. 10 : 16; 30 : 6). And the prophet Jeremiah's language is singularly emphatic (Jer. 4 : 4). It served also to Abraham and his seed as a memorial of their engagements. When they submitted to this ordinance, whether it were in infancy or at an adult age, they were no longer to consider themselves their own or at their own disposal, but as dedicated to the service of their God. Paul instructs us to consider it as "a *seal* of the righteousness of faith," inasmuch as it shadows out a circumcision of the heart, which is an inward *seal* that the sinner is justified by faith as Abraham was. *Bush.*

For Abraham and Israel alone circumcision was *divinely commanded*, and established as a *covenant-sign*. And because God actually did enjoin it, it here appears a sacred institution, which was destined to endure until the Lord should establish a higher covenant-sign, and, in place of the circumcision of the flesh, should divinely appoint that of the heart, which the former prefigured, and which enlarged means of grace rendered more attainable. Its object and significance is no doubt cleansing, moral purity—purity or circumcision of heart; the outward, as in baptism, being the emblem of the inward. C. G. B.

Viewed in its *negative* bearing, circumcision, as introduced in the family of Abraham, implied a symbolical removal from generation of what was unholy and impure; viewed *positively*, it conveyed a symbolic dedication and setting apart thereof for Divine purposes, in and through the covenant. For in this manner the covenant people is called into being and continued, and this people is to be a *holy* and a *priestly* nation (Ex. 19 : 5 and 6). This is the *objective* import of circumcision, the ground on which *God insists upon it.* Its *subjective* aspect, the ground on which Abraham administered the rite to himself and to his family, was, that thereby man falls in with the Divine covenant-idea and undertakes the covenant obligations devolving on him. Thus circumcision becomes a *sign and seal of the covenant, i e.*, it makes every one who has submitted to it a *partaker* of *the privileges*, and *demands* at his hands fulfilment of the *duties* connected with the covenant. And because not only the abstract and ideal totality of the people, but every single individual, shares in the covenant privileges and obligations, he must also personally have part in the covenant and take its sign upon himself. If even the *generation* of the covenant people is to be sanctified and devoted to covenant-purposes, it follows, as matter of course, that their *whole life*, which commences with this generation, is to be set apart for these objects (Rom. 11 : 16), to subserve and to advance them. The child begotten in circumcision is thereby sanctified for the covenant (1 Cor. 7 : 14), and this is realized when in turn it undergoes circumcision. Circumcision, which is to remove the growth of nature—that which is unholy and impure—from the principle and source of life, is, so to speak, to extend its power and influence through all the ramifications of life. It implies the obligation of withdrawing all the other relations of life from the dominion of nature, of circumcising the *foreskin of the heart, of the lips, of the ear*, and of devoting heart and mind to the duties and purposes of the covenant. K.

Circumcision may be called, with Ewald, "the offering of the body." It does not operate as an individual means of grace. Circumcision is no vehicle of sanctifying forces, as it makes no demand in reference to the internal state of the recipient. The rite effects admission to the fellowship of the covenant people, securing to the individual as a member of the nation his share in the promises and saving benefits granted to the nation as a whole. On

the other hand, circumcision binds him who *was* received it to obedience to God, whose covenant sign he bears in his body and to a blameless walk before him. Thus it is the *symbol of the renewal and purification of heart.* This signification of the rite is in the Old Testament specially brought out in the use of the phrase, *uncircumcision of heart,* to denote a want of receptivity for the things of God ; while, on the other hand, the purification of the heart by which it becomes receptive for the things of God and capable of executing God's will, is called *circumcision of the heart.* With circumcision was combined the *naming of the child,* which although it is first expressly mentioned in Luke 1 : 59 ; 2 : 21, is clearly indicated by the connection of Gen. 17 : 5 with what follows and 21 : 3 f. By this it is signified that his name expresses his having a place in the divine covenant. How frequently the giving of a name was in Israel an act of religious confession, is seen in the meanings of numerous biblical proper names. O.——Circumcision taught that what is born of the flesh can only be flesh. It suggested that it is by the painful renunciation of fleshly desire and natural self-confidence, man must be surrendered to God's service as His fit instrument for gracious ends. It was like a symbol carved upon the very flesh of Abraham, to tell him that his entire being, even in its merely animal basis of physical desires and physical powers, was claimed for the service of that God Who had called him to be His friend. *Dykes.*

In later times, when the children of Israel had grown into a distinct people, and everything was placed under the strict administration of law, it was always left open to people of other lands and tribes to enter into the bonds of the covenant through the rite of circumcision. This rite, therefore, must have had a significance for them, as well as for the more favored seed of Jacob. It spoke also to *their* hearts and consciences, and virtually declared that the covenant which it symbolized had nothing in its main design of an exclusive and contracted spirit ; that its greater things lay open to all who were willing to seek them in the appointed way ; and that if at first there were individual persons, and afterward a single people, who were more especially identified with the covenant, it was only to mark them out as the chosen representatives of its nature and objects, and to constitute them lights for the instruction and benefit of others. There never was a more evident misreading of the palpable facts of history than appears in the disposition so often manifested to limit the rite of circumcision to one line merely of Abraham's posterity, and to regard it as the mere outward badge of an external national distinction. It is to be held, then, as certain in regard to the sign of the covenant as in regard to the covenant itself, that its more special and marked connection with individuals was only for the sake of more effectually helping forward its general design. And not less firmly is it to be held that the outwardness in the rite was *for the sake of the inward and spiritual truths* it symbolized. It was appointed as the distinctive badge of the covenant, because it was peculiarly fitted for symbolically expressing the spiritual character and design of the covenant. It marked the condition of every one who received it, as having to do both with higher powers and higher objects than those of corrupt nature, as the condition of one brought into blessed fellowship with God, and therefore called to walk before Him and be perfect. When God was establishing a covenant, the great object of which was to reverse the propagation of evil, to secure a seed that should be itself blessed, and a source of blessing to the world, He affixed to the covenant this symbolical rite—to show that the end was to be reached, not as the result of nature's ordinary productiveness, but of nature purged from its uncleanness—nature raised above itself, in league with the grace of God, and bearing on it the distinctive impress of His character and working. It taught the circumcised man that he must no longer follow the unregulated will and impulse of nature, but live in accordance with the high relation he occupied, and the sacred calling he had received.

Most truly, therefore, does the apostle say that Abraham received circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had—a divine token in his own case that he had attained through faith to such fellowship with God, and righteousness in him—and a token for every child that should afterward receive it ; not indeed that he actually possessed the same, but that he was called to possess it, and had a right to the privileges and hopes which might enable him to attain to the possession. Most truly also does the apostle say in another place : "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly (*i.e.*, not a Jew in the right sense, not such an one as God would recognize and own) ; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly : and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God." The very design of the covenant was to secure a seed with these inward and spiritual

characteristics ; and the sign of the covenant, the outward impression in the flesh, was worthless, a mere external concision—as the apostle calls it, when it came to be alone—excepting in so far as it was the expression of the corresponding reality. . . . The children of Israel had no right to the benefits of the covenant merely because they had been outwardly circumcised ; nor were any promises made to them simply as the natural seed of Abraham. Both elements had to meet in their condition, the natural and the spiritual ; the spiritual, however, more especially, and the natural only as connected with the spiritual, and a means for securing it. Hence Moses urged them so earnestly to circumcise their *hearts*, as absolutely necessary to their getting the fulfilment of what was promised. . . . It may also be noted, that by this quite natural and fundamental view of the ordinance, subordinate peculiarities admit of an easy explanation. For example, the limitation of the sign to males—which in the circumstances could not be otherwise ; though the special purifications under the law for women might justly be regarded as providing for them a sort of counterpart. Then, the fixing on the eighth day as the proper one for the rite —that being the first day after the revolution of an entire week of separation from the mother, and when fully withdrawn from connection with the parent's blood, it began to live and breathe in its own impurity. P. F.

**14. The uncircumcised shall be cut off.** The entrance into this covenant was not voluntary. None of Abraham's posterity could withdraw from the grace which, by means of this covenant, was bestowed on the whole people, and through them on the whole world. The punishment of " being cut off from his people," which God threatens on the neglect of circumcision, occurs very frequently afterward, under the law, as the penalty for very grievous crimes. This punishment is a threatening, on God's part, that all the evil should overtake the transgressor, from which, through God's covenant, he was defended. *Gerl.*——The simple meaning seems to be, that the uncircumcised should have no right to nor share in the blessings of the covenant, which were both of a temporal and spiritual kind : and if so, then eternal death was implied ; for it was impossible for a person who had not received the *spiritual purification* to enter into eternal glory. The *spirit* of this law extends to all ages and dispensations —he whose heart is not purified from sin cannot enter into the kingdom of God. A. C.

**5. Thy name shall be Abraham.** **15. Sarah her name shall be.** It certainly has a peculiar meaning, that when we enter on the second stage in the life of the chosen, the names of *Abram and his wife should be changed.* This, as it were, is a *symbol* and an *earnest* of the new thing which the Lord is to bring forth. For "the name indicates the character." It is the *motto* for the new path of life opening before them. K.

**17. Abraham fell upon his face and laughed.** From the reverential attitude assumed by Abraham we infer that his laughter sprang from joyful and grateful surprise. *Said in his heart.* The following questions of wonder are not addressed to God ; they do not express doubt of the fulfilment of the promise, but surprise at the unexpected mode in which it is to be fulfilled. M.——It was a laughter of delight, not of distrust. Even the promises of a holy God, as well as his performances, are the joys of holy souls ; there is the joy of faith as well as the joy of fruition. Now it was that Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day ; now he saw it and was glad (John 8 : 56), for as he saw heaven in the promise of Canaan, so he saw Christ in the promise of Isaac. He does not here speak as at all *doubtful* (for we are sure that *he staggered not at the promise*), but as very *wonderful*, and that which could not be effected but by the almighty power of God. H.

**18.** In that plaintive, clinging cry of fatherhood, " Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee !" one hears with what a painful rending of heart the man tore himself loose from the anticipations of a dozen years, to school himself into the expectation of a gift, new, strange, and unheard-of—the gift of a miraculous child. *Dykes.*——Even so—responds the great parental heart of God—I know the heart of a parent ; therefore I said " I will be a God to thee *and to thy seed after thee;*" not to thee alone but to thee, and also, not less, to thy beloved offspring besides. *I have heard thee, for Ishmael!* H. C.

**19.** Temporal blessings were assured to Ishmael, in answer to Abraham's earnest prayer ; but the covenant was " *established* with Isaac." He is emphatically called the *child of the promise* and Ishmael the *child of the flesh* by the Apostle Paul, who carries out the contrast in a very remarkable passage (Gal. 4 : 21-31). Ishmael's share in the temporal promise was confirmed by his circumcision ; and the rite is still observed by the Arabs and other Semitic races. P. S.

**20. Twelve princes shall he beget.** This circumstance is particular, but it was fulfilled. Moses hath given us the names of these

twelve princes (chap. 25 : 13–16), by which we are to understand, not that they were so many distinct sovereign princes but heads of clans or tribes. Heathen writers speak of the Arabian *phylarchs*, or rulers of tribes ; and of that people having twelve kings over them. The people have ever since lived in tribes ; and still continue to do so, as Thevenot and other modern travellers testify. . . . It was somewhat wonderful and not to be foreseen by human sagacity, that a man's whole posterity should so nearly resemble him, and retain the same inclinations, the same habits, and the same customs, throughout all ages ! These are the only people, besides the Jews, who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning ; and in some respects they very much resemble each other. 1. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are descended from Abraham, and both boast of their descent from the father of the faithful. 2. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are circumcised, and both profess to have derived this ceremony from Abraham. 3. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, had originally *twelve patriarchs*, who were their princes or governors. 4. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, marry among themselves, and in their own tribes. 5. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are singular in several of their customs, and are standing monuments to all ages, of the exactness of the divine predictions, and of the veracity of Scripture history. We may, with more confidence, believe the particulars related of Abraham and Ishmael, when we see them verified in their posterity at this day. This is having, as it were, ocular demonstration for our faith. *Bp. Newton.*

**21. My covenant will I establish with Isaac.** All *temporal* good things are promised to Ishmael and his posterity, but the establishment of the Lord's covenant is to be with Isaac. Hence it is fully evident, that this covenant referred chiefly to *spiritual* things—to the Messiah, and the salvation which should be brought to both Jews and Gentiles by his incarnation, death, and glorification. A. C.——My spiritual covenant ; my everlasting covenant. As for the temporal covenant, or promise, Ishmael was made as much partaker of it as Isaac ; and so was Esau as well as Jacob. *Bp. Wilson.* ——Paul points out a material difference between these two sons of Abraham. He says that Ishmael, the son of the bond-woman, was born only according to the flesh, in the common course of nature ; but that Isaac was born by virtue of the promise, and by the particular interposition of the Divine power ; and that these two sons of Abraham were designed to represent the two covenants of the Law and of the Gospel ; the former a state of bondage, the latter of freedom (Gal. 4). *Bp. Tomline.*

**22. God went up from Abraham.** Ascended evidently before him so that he had the fullest proof that it was no human being, no earthly angel or messenger, that talked with him : and the promise of a son in the course of a single year, *at this set time in the next year* (ver. 21), which had every human probability against it, was to be the sure token of the truth of all that had hitherto taken place ; and the proof that all that was further promised should be fulfilled in its due time. A. C.

**23–27.** Abraham executes the divine command first upon Ishmael, whose descendants (the Arabs) still perform the rite at the age of thirteen ; next upon his servants, both those born in his house, and those bought ("with his money of any stranger, not of his seed," ver. 12), and lastly upon himself (ver. 26), being now no less than ninety-nine years old. We may infer from the execution of this order how greatly Abraham was reverenced by his family, his authority over them, and the excellent discipline he maintained among them. How punctual also his obedience : "on the self-same day !" C. G. B.——*Abraham fulfils the Divine command in the obedience of faith.* Here was the sign of his unwavering faith in God's promise and covenant. However momentary doubt may have dimmed his spiritual sight, the direct assurance from God clears it again. He hesitates not to perform the painful operation on himself and all in his house. Nor is there the slightest delay. It is done "the self-same day." *Alf.* ——It was a *speedy* obedience. Sincere obedience is not dilatory. While the command is yet sounding in our ears, and the sense of duty is fresh, it is good to apply ourselves to it immediately, lest we deceive ourselves by putting it off to a more convenient season. It was an *universal* obedience ; he did not circumcise his family and excuse himself, but set them an example ; nor did he take the comfort of the seal of the covenant to himself only, but desired that all might share with him in it. H.

Ever since those days has the sign of circumcision remained to bear testimony to the covenant with Abraham. On the eighth day, as the first full period of seven has elapsed, a new period is, as it were, to begin ; and each Jewish child so circumcised is a living witness to the transaction between God and Abraham more than three thousand years ago. A. E.

### Circumcision and Baptism.

As the sense of the passover covenant, expressive of faith in the atoning blood of the Lamb from a *prophetic* standpoint, in eating the flesh and sprinkling the blood, was modified to express faith in the atoning blood from a *historic* standpoint, by eating the bread, symbolizing the broken body, and drinking the wine, symbolizing the shed blood of the Lamb of God ;—so circumcision, the seal of the covenant with Abraham organizing the Church, was changed—from the act symbolizing from a *prophetic* standpoint, faith's longings and hopeful trust in divine power for the cutting off the sins of the flesh—to the act of washing with water, symbolizing from a *historic* standpoint, faith contemplating the divine power to regenerate and purify, given in the outpouring of the Spirit. Just as the Lord's Supper is simply a New Testament modification of the passover seal of the covenant through Moses to redeem the Church by his blood, so the ordinance of baptism is but the New Testament modification of the seal of circumcision appended to the covenant with Abraham organizing the visible Church. S. R.

The relation between circumcision and baptism is not properly that of type and antitype ; the one is a symbolical ordinance as well as the other, and both alike have an outward form and an inward reality. It is precisely in such ordinances that the Old and the New Dispensations approach nearest to each other, and, we might almost say, stand formally upon the same level. The difference does not so much lie in the ordinances themselves, as in the comparative amount of grace and truth respectively exhibited in them—necessarily less in the earlier, and more in the later. The difference in external form was in each case conditioned by the circumstances of the time. In circumcision it bore respect to the propagation of offspring, as it was through the production of a seed of blessing that the covenant, in its preparatory form, was to attain its realization. But when the seed in that respect had reached its culminating point in Christ, and the objects of the covenant were no longer dependent on natural propagation of seed, but were to be carried forward by spiritual means and influences used in connection with the faith of Christ, the external ordinance was fitly altered, so as to express simply a change of nature and state in the individual that received it. The apostle makes use of the earlier rite to explain the symbolical import of the later, and describes the spiritual change indicated and required by it as "a putting-off of the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ," and "having the uncircumcision of the flesh quickened together with Christ." It would have been travelling entirely in the wrong direction, to use such language for purposes of explanation in Christian times, if the ordinance of circumcision had not shadowed forth this spiritual quickening and purification even more palpably and impressively than baptism itself ; and shadowed it forth, not prospectively alone for future times, but immediately and personally for the members of the Old Covenant For the outward putting away of the filth of the flesh in circumcision could never have symbolized a corresponding inward purification for the members of the New Covenant, if it had not first done this for the members of the Old. The shadow must have a substance in the one case as well as in the other. Such being the case as to the essential agreement between the two ordinances, an important element for deciding in regard to the propriety of infant baptism may still be derived from the practice established in the rite of circumcision. The grand principle of connecting parent and child together for the attainment of spiritual objects, and marking the connection by an impressive signature, was there most distinctly and broadly sanctioned. And if the parental bond and its attendant obligations be not weakened, but rather elevated and strengthened, by the higher revelations of the Gospel, it would be strange indeed if the liberty at least, nay, the propriety and right, if not the actual obligation, to have their children brought by an initiatory ordinance under the bond of the covenant, did not belong to parents under the Gospel. The one ordinance no more than the other insures the actual transmission of the grace necessary to effect the requisite change ; but it exhibits that grace—on the part of God pledges it—and takes the subject of the ordinance bound to use it for the accomplishment of the proper end. Baptism does this now, as circumcision did of old ; and if it was done in the one case through the medium of the parent to the child, one does not see why it may not be done now, unless positively prohibited, in the other. . . . It is not in respect to the soul's inward and personal state, that either ordinance can properly be called initiatory (for in that respect blessing might be had initially without the one as well as the other), but in respect to the person's recognized connection with the corporate society of those who are subjects of blessing. This begins now with baptism,

and it began of old with circumcision : till the individual was circumcised, he was not reckoned as belonging to that society ; and if passing the proper time for the ordinance without it, he was to be held as *ipso facto* cut off. Under both covenants there is an inward and an outward bond of connection with the peculiar blessing : the inward faith in God's word of promise (of old, faith in God ; now more specifically, faith in Christ) ; the outward, circumcision formerly, now baptism. Yet the two in neither case should be viewed as altogether apart, but the one should rather be held as the formal expression and seal of the other. P. F.

In this covenant charter to Abraham a principle common to all the covenants pertaining to the work of redemption, the principle of family representation, stands out with peculiar prominence. While the scriptures, everywhere, especially guard us against the error of supposing that the blessings of salvation, according to the covenant of grace, have respect to natural descent, or that men born again are born "of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man," or any other than "born of God ;" yet, on the other hand, special prominence is given to the fact, that in the out-working, in time, of the scheme of redemption, the children of those who are themselves parties to the covenants of God have a birthright to the privileges and the penalties of those covenants. Thus, by virtue of the penalty of the broken covenant of works with Adam, every child born of the race of Adam is born to die. By virtue of the covenant of redemption with Christ, as the second Adam, every mortal that dies must rise again from the dead. Under the covenant of grace with Adam, when there was to be a destruction of the race by water, God said unto Noah, "Come thou and *all thy house* into the ark, for *thee* have I seen righteous ;" and for the righteousness of Noah, even the scoffing Ham is sheltered from the impending doom. Under the covenant with Noah, not to destroy again with a flood, every child descended from Noah to the end of time has a birthright in that guarantee promise. Under the covenant with David, his male offspring, in every succeeding generation, had a birthright claim to the throne of Israel, to which even their unfaithfulness could prove no bar ; the reason assigned for not rejecting the unworthy apostates, as Saul was rejected, is—"the oath which I swear to David." In several careful repetitions that principle is made to stand forth pre-eminently in this covenant with Abraham. His children, in successive generations, are recognized as having a birthright, not only in its general privileges, but as born members of the great visible community which this covenant, as a charter, founds and organizes : and it is commanded that they be formally recognized as citizens by birth, by affixing, through their parents for them, their signature, and the seal to this covenant. And so intimate a part of the structure is this principle, that no matter what extent of meaning be given to the covenant, this principle must go into that meaning ; and no matter what enlarged degree of development of the covenant, this principle must go into that development. Here, then, far back at the very root of the visible Church, and fundamental in its charter, we find the rights of our children to a place with us in the Church, as Christ's spiritual commonwealth. S. R.

Listen to the covenant : "He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you." Mark how this renewal of the covenant turns upon the consecration of *children*. God did appoint circumcision for the child eight days old ! Christian baptism is founded upon this very covenant. Abraham was ninety-and-nine years old when he was circumcised, Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, and then came the infant men children. So in heathen countries, the man is baptized, and the woman, and the child of days. We plead Divine precedent. Whatever objections stand against baptism stand against circumcision, and, therefore, stand against God. The child does not understand the alphabet, do not teach it ; the child does not understand language, do not teach it ; the child does not understand the Lord's Prayer, do not teach it. You say the child will understand by and by ; exactly so ; that answer is good ; and by and by the child will understand that it was baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, three persons in one God. Beautiful, too, is Christian baptism when regarded as the expansion of the idea of circumcision. It well befits a tenderer law ; circumcision was severe ; baptism is gentle : circumcision was limited to men-children ; baptism is administered to all : circumcision was established in one tribe, or family, or line of descent ; baptism is the universal rite,—Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. So we go from law to grace ; from Moses to the Lamb ; from the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, to the quiet and holy Zion. J. P.

When the Son of God came to earth he found a church existing. Of that church not only up-grown believers, but their little ones, were members. That Church, with all its faults of administration, was still the Church of God, and the Lord Jesus joined it, and he joined it in his infancy. True, he himself set up another Church, but that other Church was virtually an expansion and a spiritualization of the old one. There was still a chosen generation,—a *holy* nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood,—and the question just is, "Are the privileges of the Christian Church equal to those of its Hebrew predecessor? Federally, in respect of a covenant relation to God, is the child of a New Testament believer on as good a footing as the child of an Old Testament saint; and in joining Christ's Church, with its new and better promises, may I claim as much for my children as in joining the old church of Moses?" Remember that Christ's charge, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them," was addressed to Hebrew apostles. It was addressed, that is, not to Gentiles nor to anti-pedobaptists, but to Jews,—men to whom the idea of infant-membership in the Church was as familiar as the membership of adults. Ten days had elapsed since the baptismal commission was issued. The Holy Ghost was given, and the great Christian mission began, and to his audience of five thousand awakened penitents, all Jews or Jewish proselytes, all familiar with the idea of infant Church-membership, all clinging with a fond intensity to the great federal promise on which that infant Church-membership was founded, in the first Christian sermon ever preached, Peter exclaimed: "Repent and be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and *to your children.*" Publishing the salvation of the Gospel covenant, and summoning that convinced assembly to Christian Baptism, Christ's Apostles, endowed with power from on high, maintain that the old connection between parents and children still subsists. What would be the inference of their Hebrew auditors? What else could it possibly be, but that, like the Abrahamic covenant, the covenant of Christian Baptism was broad enough to take in not only the up-grown proselyte, but his children too? We feel that the Church cannot err in receiving into its arms those whom the Saviour embraced in His own. We feel that the New Testament Church cannot err in receiving as its inmates those who were members of the Old Testament Church, and who are to be members of the Church in heaven. *Hamilton.*

### The Abrahamic Covenant and the New Testament Church.

The covenant of God with Abraham under the old dispensation, and his covenant with men in these days of the Gospel, compose his great church arrangement for the salvation of the world. The Church of God, as to its *origin*, was intimated to man at the moment of his fall, but found its first development in the Abrahamic covenant; as to its *essence*, the unity of the Church in earlier and in later times is established by identity of parties, relations, agencies, and objects; as to its *form*, it was encumbered by a multitude of observances, ceremonial and political, in ancient times, while its modern administration is marked by simplicity and spirituality; and as to its *force*, while the Abrahamic covenant worked as a temporal arrangement to the close of the first dispensation, it clearly carried at the same time a spiritual bearing, co-extensive with the general features of the Christian Church in the gospel dispensation. Therefore *The Church under the Abrahamic covenant, and the New Testament dispensation are substantially one and the same institution.*

The New Testament Church embraces six particulars, and only six that are material: 1. Its dignity; a permanent covenant. 2. Its parties; God and man. 3. Its provisions; the Son and the Spirit. 4. Its great requirement of man; faith. 5. Its great promise by God; salvation. 6. Its appointed seal; a significant rite. Each of these particulars is fully embraced in God's covenant with the patriarch; that covenant therefore is the great gospel covenant; the constitution of the Church.

I. The Abrahamic covenant is a *permanent arrangement.* This appears from the language of the covenant itself; "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant." The multiplied and most solemn rehearsals of the covenant through all periods of the Old Testament dispensation declare it to be an everlasting covenant. It survives the Old Testament dispensation, and acts in full force under the reign of the Gospel, as an everlasting covenant. Writing to the Galatians, Paul argues the necessary perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, from its very nature as a solemnized compact. Such a transaction between men, says the apostle, is stable and binding; "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto" (3 : 15). The Abrahamic covenant had been "ordered in all things and sure," and

preceded the Sinai covenant more than four centuries, wherefore Paul continues, "Now this I say, brethren, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." In substance this is Paul's reasoning: All the integrities of the Godhead had solemnly pledged certain blessings to Abraham and his seed forever. This covenant is immutable in its nature. Therefore the introduction of a new economy five hundred years after, in the days of Moses, could not destroy the covenant. By parity of reasoning, the introduction of another, two thousand years after, in the days of Christ, could not make the promise of none effect. Thus, with the strongest assurance, the apostle speaks of the blessings of God's covenant with Abraham as actually descending upon Gentiles in these days of the Gospel.

The Abrahamic covenant is therefore clearly a permanent arrangement for all periods of this world's history: because it is God's covenant with Abraham and his seed in their generations for an everlasting covenant; it was renewed in the persons of Isaac, Jacob, David, and all Israel as a covenant, an oath, a law, a word to a thousand generations, an everlasting covenant; was rehearsed as such by the prophets to the very close of the Old Testament dispensation; is still denominated in the New Testament an everlasting covenant, and marked by the well-known patriarchal promises; and is finally proved by the express argument of an inspired man to be essentially immutable.

II. The parties to the Abrahamic covenant are clearly God and man, because Abraham, the representative of man's interest in the covenant, is styled the "father of many nations," "of all that believe," "of us all," and "heir of the world;" because the condition of the covenant being spiritual, one man is as near to the covenant as another, and all have access to it; because Abraham believed before he was circumcised, that the covenant might not be confined to the Jews, but extend to all mankind.

So far as the *second* feature of the New Testament Church is concerned—the *parties*—the Abrahamic covenant is identical with the Gospel. The New Testament Church extends to all who believe. So does the Abrahamic covenant.

III. Its *provisions* are the Son and the Spirit. That the Abrahamic covenant embraces *Christ* we are fully assured by the most explicit apostolic interpretation of its language. In the seventeenth of Genesis, God covenants with Abraham and his seed. In the third of Galatians, Paul says explicitly that the seed of Abraham, in the eye of this covenant, is Christ. If Christ is indeed the seed of Abraham, then these things clearly follow: The Abrahamic covenant is a standing covenant, not confined to the old economy, but extending to all generations: a universal covenant, not limited to the Jews, but opening itself to all the human family; a covenant, in its bounty providing the Son and the Spirit; in its authority, requiring faith on man's part; its reward, in promising salvation on the part of God; and in its designation, marked by a heaven-appointed seal. Paul assures us, that long before the institution of the Mosaic economy the Abrahamic covenant was confirmed by God in Christ (Gal. 3 : 17). If so, then, that covenant must have included the Saviour from its earliest inception. This glorious truth is sealed by the declared end of Christ's sufferings and work on Calvary. It is inspired language that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." But why? "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." If the blessing of the Abrahamic covenant looks to Christ crucified as a channel,—as means to an end,—that covenant includes Christ. Now if Christ is the seed of the covenant; if he is a horn of salvation in performance of the covenant; if he is a helper of Israel in remembrance of the covenant; if he is God's confirmation of the covenant; if he is a curse for us to secure the blessings of the covenant; then, of a truth, the Abrahamic covenant embraces Christ, and was always a nullity without him.

The Abrahamic covenant provides *the Spirit* also. We have the express Scripture testimony on this head. We are told that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3 : 14). Here, in one inspired sentence, the blessing vouchsafed to Abraham and his seed in the covenant, includes in express terms both the Son and the Spirit. Christ works to secure the blessing of the covenant, and the Spirit is promised as a part of the blessing thus secured. Then in this *third* feature—the provisions involved—the Abrahamic covenant is identical with the Gospel.

IV. All men know that faith is the all-inclusive requirement of the Gospel. But the Abra-

hamic covenant, like the Gospel, works through the righteousness of faith. (1.) The promise to Abraham was through faith. We know that Abraham believed God before he was circumcised We know, too, that Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness. We know by the Old Testament that the seal of the covenant was circumcision. And we know by the New Testament that the great import of circumcision was faith. For we have the testimony of an apostle, that Abraham received the sign of circumcision, "a seal of the righteousness of faith." (2.) The promise of Abraham's seed required faith. The apostle says, "the promise to Abraham and his seed was not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Rom. 4 : 13). "Know ye, therefore, that they who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. So then they who are of faith, the same are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal. 3 : 7, 9). Now if Abraham was justified by the righteousness of faith ; if the promise to his seed is made only through the righteousness of faith ; if it was recorded in the beginning that Abraham obtained his righteousness by faith, precisely that we might believe and obtain the same righteousness ; if we who believe are the children of Abraham, and any other principle of acceptance, as the apostle says, would vitiate the promise ; if the seal of the covenant is circumcision, and the scriptural meaning of circumcision is faith ; and, finally, if the provisions of the covenant are, first, Christ a curse for us, the great object of faith, and, second, the Spirit of Christ, the great agent of faith,—what can be clearer than that in this *fourth* feature—the requirement of faith—the Abrahamic covenant is identical with the New Testament Church ?

V. The great promise by God is redemption. Spiritual and saving promises are perpetually connected with the Abrahamic covenant as interpreted both by Old and New Testament writers. All their language evidently imports the salvation of the Gospel. New Testament statements, especially, settle this point. The duty required by the covenant—faith a righteousness—clearly shows that salvation is the reward. The provisions secured—the Son and the Spirit—clearly show that nothing less than salvation can be the offer of the covenant. The price of the blessing—Christ a curse for us—settles the fact that God's promise in the Abrahamic covenant is Christian redemption. Now if the language of the covenant promises Canaan for a possession, and Jehovah for a God ; if the prophetic interpretation of the covenant includes God's presence with them, and abode in them, and blessing upon them, clothing them with robes of righteousness and the garments of salvation ; and if the New Testament teaches that the Abrahamic covenant requires faith, promises the Son and the Spirit, and needs the atonement to secure the blessing,—then, of a truth, the great promise of God in the Abrahamic covenant is salvation. Then in this *fifth* feature of the covenant—its *reward*—the Abrahamic institution is identical with the Gospel.

VI. Its *appointed seal* is an *emblematic rite.* It is not enough to say that the Abrahamic covenant, like the New Testament Church, has its divinely appointed sign and seal. More than this is true. Substantially the sign and the seal of the Abrahamic covenant is the sign and the seal of the Gospel covenant. This is true in a general sense. Each in its general nature is an outward sign of an inward grace. "Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Peter 3 : 21). "Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter" (Rom. 2 : 29). Each, too, in its general office, is the covenant of a purity required of man (Gen 17 : 11), and promised by God (Deut. 30 : 6). But the similitude between baptism and circumcision is not confined to their general features ; it is exact in every important particular. Four things define Christian baptism : 1. By its nature, baptism expresses purification from defilement. So does circumcision. 2. By scriptural appointment, baptism stands for faith a righteousness. So does circumcision (Rom. 4 : 11). 3. By baptism the subject speaks out his repentance and faith, covenanting with God, and God pledges purification and pardon, covenanting with the subject. Precisely this is the operation in circumcision (Gen. 17 : 11). . 4. In the very use of baptism the subject literally enters into God's family, and is received by him. Exactly so was it with him who was circumcised of old (Phil. 3 : 3). Respecting this last feature of the New Testament Church—the appointed seal, an emblematic rite—is not the Abrahamic covenant identical with the New Testament Church ? The covenant of the Church in our day carries a sign and a seal appointed of God, and embodying the substance of the covenant, both on God's part and on man's. The covenant of the Church in Abraham's day employed a sign and a seal equally appointed of God, and descriptive of the respective pledges of the parties. It follows that the Abrahamic covenant and the

Gospel economy, or New Testament Church, are one and the same institution.

It will be readily granted, if we separate from any given institution a permanent character; or from it its parties, God and man; or from its provisions, the Son and the Spirit; or from its requirements, faith a righteousness; or from its promise, eternal salvation; or from its consummation, a divine seal emblematic of the covenant; we thereby prove that it is not the New Testament Church. But if we show an institution of which these six things are true:—first, it is a divine arrangement as durable as the world; second, its parties are God and man; third, its provisions are the Son and the Spirit; fourth, its requirement is faith a righteousness; fifth, its promise is final salvation; sixth, its consummation is a divine rite embodying the covenant,—is not that institution the Gospel economy—the New Testament Church? If any man denies this proposition, what can he say? Certainly such an institution fills up the definition of the Church precisely. What is lacking? Here is the Founder of the Church! And the permanency of the Church! And the parties of the Church! And the provisions of the Church! And the requirement of the Church! And the reward of the Church! And the seal of the Church! And what of the Church is *not* here? Thus the Abrahamic covenant is the Gospel,—that is, it is a system of salvation by Jesus Christ, which of old justified Abraham by faith, and is now justifying the heathen on the same principle. In the third chapter of Galatians the New Testament name is given to the Old Testament covenant. The apostle expressly affirms this covenant with Abraham to be "*The Gospel.*" God of old made a covenant with Abraham. In so doing, the apostle says, "He preached the Gospel unto Abraham." *J. C. Styles.*

## Section 45.

### A SON PROMISED. INTERCESSION FOR SODOM.

GENESIS 18 : 1–33.

1 AND the LORD appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the
2 heat of the day; and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood over against
him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to
3 the earth, and said, My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray
4 thee, from thy servant: let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest your-
5 selves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your heart; after
that ye shall pass on: forasmuch as ye are come to your servant. And they said, So do, as
6 thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready
7 quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes. And Abraham ran unto the
herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant; and he hasted to dress
8 it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them;
9 and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. And they said unto him, Where is
10 Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto
thee when the season cometh round; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah
11 heard in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, *and* well
12 stricken in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. And Sarah
laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old
13 also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a
14 surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the set time I
15 will return unto thee, when the season cometh round, and Sarah shall have a son. Then
Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst
laugh.
16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with
17 them to bring them on the way. And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I
18 do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations

19 of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment ; to the end that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he
20 hath spoken of him. And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great,
21 and because their sin is very grievous ; I will go down now, and see whether they have done
22 altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me ; and if not, I will know. And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom : but Abraham stood yet before the
23 LORD. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?
24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city : wilt thou consume and not spare the
25 place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked ; that be
26 far from thee : shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the LORD said, If I find in
27 Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sake. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which
28 am but dust and ashes : peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous : wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, I will not destroy it, if I find there forty
29 and five. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty
30 found there. And he said, I will not do it for the forty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak : peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he
31 said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord : peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I
32 will not destroy it for the twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once : peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not
33 destroy it for the ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham : and Abraham returned unto his place.

The principles of moral goodness were well-nigh extinguished in the human heart, and the practice of the moral virtues had almost disappeared from the earth. And intemperance, ferocity, lust, fraud, and violence might have brought a second deluge upon the race, had not the truth of God stood pledged against the repetition of so dire a calamity. E. C. W.—— Wicked as all the nations of those lands were, the people of this one tract appear to have surpassed the rest in atrocity. "The Lord said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and their sin is very grievous." The insults to Heaven had, as it were, come up with a strength, and loudness, and outrage, greater than from other parts of the earth. It was time for the righteous Governor to manifest himself. And as the first circumstance, three persons came as on a friendly visit to Abraham. It is impossible not to be struck with the calmness and quietness of the proceeding. There were no terrible portents--no magnificent phenomena—no thundering menaces—nor formidable preparations—nor effulgence of Divine Majesty. The patriarch's hospitality was accepted. The first thing unusual was a matter of complacent interest,—a renewed assurance of posterity to Abraham. But to think what this friendly converse was the introduction to! J. F.

**1. And the Lord appeared unto him.** When we consider what our Saviour saith, "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him :" we must be convinced that it was not God the Father who showed Himself in these appearances ; but that it was He, the Logos or WORD, who appeared to the Patriarchs ; and neither God the Father nor His angels. *Bp. Wilson.*

**2. Three men.** Such they were in outward appearance, but the Apostle (Heb. 13 : 1) calls them "angels," whom Abraham entertained unawares, *i.e.* not knowing them to be such. To him they appeared to be three strangers on a journey, and as such he treated them. It is generally conceded that two of these were created angels. As to the third, it can scarcely be doubted that he was the same divine personage who, under the name of "Angel," or "Angel of Jehovah," so frequently appeared to the patriarchs in human form. Certain it is that this personage appears in the subsequent part of the narrative (v. 13–22), and yet there is not the least intimation of any other appearance than that of the three men whom Abraham entertained. The inference therefore is fair that the Son of God, anticipating his future manifestation in the flesh, constituted one of the company. *Bush.*——In v. 1 it is said, "The LORD appeared unto him ;" in v. 22 it is said, "The *men* turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom ; but Abraham stood yet

before the LORD;" in ch. 19 :1 it is said, "There came *two Angels* to Sodom at even." It appears from the comparison of these passages, and indeed from the whole narrative, that of the three men who appeared to Abraham, two were angels, and one was JEHOVAH Himself. E. H. B.

**3-8.** All the marks of obeisance and respect are such as are still common in the East. Even the deference shown by him in *standing* by while his guests partook of his food, without presuming to take part with them, has been more than once witnessed by ourselves in eastern lands. We have noticed instances in which, when the host was a man of rank and consequence, he has brought in, with his own hands, some principal dish, and remained standing, or in attendance, during the whole meal, directing the operations of the servants in removing and in laying on. *Kit.*

Abraham's dwelling was a tent, probably of dark-brown camel's-hair cloth, like the tents of his dependants. Only in this was he distinguished from them, that a separate tent was pitched for the females of his family. His repast was spread for him before the tent door, beneath the shade of some friendly tree. The most usual articles of food were *leben*, or sour coagulated milk (which is still the chief dish of the Syrian Arab), and unleavened cakes baked upon the hot hearth. To these might be added on festive occasions, or when strangers were to be entertained, the roasted flesh of a kid or of a calf. Hospitality to the passing traveller ranked among the most sacred and imperative of all duties, as is usually the case wherever public places of rest or entertainment do not exist. *Dykes.*

The Arab tents are either round, resting in the middle on poles, eight or ten feet high ; or oblong, resting on seven to nine poles, of which three are higher than the others—the middle one the highest. The covering is a thick black material, made of goat's or camel's-hair, – this, tightly stretched, will keep out any rain or dew. The tents have two or three divisions—for the cattle, the men, and the women : the outside compartment for the more tender of the cattle ; the next for the men ; and the third, inner one, Kubba—in Arabic Alkobba (alcove) —is for the women. The Emirs have separate tents for the cattle and for the women. The tents are frequently pitched under large trees for the shade. Thus lived Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the land of Canaan. *Gerl.*

The strangers were Heaven's pilgrims, and while they tarried Mamre was holy ground. And so with Bible truths. Have a heart hospitable to whatever comes from God, and no fear but glorious truths will come—truths whose arrival will blaze with light from heaven, and whose entrance into the homestead of your convictions will create a holiday : truths whose coming will make your life more happy, and your lot illustrious to yourself. The truths of God will come, and God himself will come ; and if you entertain them, they will not, like Abraham's angels, seek to pass away. The Bible abounds in stately and self-commending truths. The Sovereignty of God, the Substitution and Satisfaction of Immanuel, the Righteousness of Jehovah-Jesus, the Christ-revealing and soul-renewing work of the Holy Spirit, the Intercession of the Heavenly High Priest, the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, the necessity of Holiness, present salvation, the prevalency of Prayer, —to many men these truths merely exist as dogmas, which they have stowed away in the dusty chamber of their formal creed. But happy is the man to whom they come in their angelic garb, imperial in faith's purple, and radiant in emitted splendor, "trailing clouds of glory with them as they come." And happy is the man who, blessed with such God-like visitors, detains them as perpetual residents ; and bidding all his love and faith and veneration wait on them and serve them, finds his being exalted into the home of high conviction, the palace of God's own truth. In such a man the Word of Christ dwells richly. *Hamilton.*

**8. Did eat.** All this happened as narrated. Man eats that he may live. An angel eats to be like a man. *Gerl.*——If the angels took upon themselves a human body, they could also eat.

**9-11.** The narrative distinctly and decisively proves that the renewal of the promise was meant for Sarah and not for Abraham. The first sentence which the strangers utter, is to inquire : "Where is Sarah thy wife?" and immediately afterward the messenger of Jehovah adds the prediction, which it was meant Sarah should hear, and which she actually heard. Then follows the colloquy between the heavenly guest and Sarah, in which Abraham takes no part. K.

**10. Sarah thy wife shall have a son.** It is repeated again (v. 14). Thus the promises of the Messiah were often repeated in the Old Testament, for the strengthening of the faith of God's people. We are slow of heart to believe, and therefore have need of line upon line to the same purport. This is that word of promise which the apostle quotes (Rom. 9 : 9), as that by the virtue of which Isaac was born. H.

**12.** Abraham heard this news from the angel and laughed ; Sarah heard it and laughed : they did not more agree in their desire than differ in their affection ; Abraham laughed for joy ; Sarah, for distrust ; Abraham laughed because he believed it would be so ; Sarah, because she believed it could not be so : the same act varies in the manner of doing and the intention of the doer. Yet Sarah laughed but within herself and is betrayed : how God can find us out in secret sins ! How easily did she now think that he, which could know of her inward laughter, could know of her conception ; and now she that laughed and believed not, believeth and feareth. *Bp. H.*

**13. The Lord.** The chief speaker is denoted, first by the mere pronoun, which is often used when God is meant, and then by the name JEHOVAH. It appears from the sequel, that while the chief of the three (Jehovah himself) remained behind in converse with Abraham, and then "went his way" to execute judgment upon Sodom, the other two were sent forward to rescue Lot. P. S.

**Wherefore did Sarah laugh?** The prerogative of God extendeth as well to the reason as to the will of man ; so that, as we are to obey his law, though we find a reluctation in our reason. For if we believe only that which is agreeable to our sense, we give consent to the matter, and not to the author ; which is no more than we would do toward a suspected and discredited witness ; but that faith which was accounted to Abraham for righteousness was of such a point as whereat Sarah laughed, who therein was an image of natural reason. *Bacon.*

**14, 15.** It seems to have been a signal mercy to her, thus to have had her secret sin detected and reproved. From this time we hear no more of her unbelief ; on the contrary, the rebuke administered to her was effectual for the confirming and establishing her faith. In the account given of the most eminent saints who were distinguished for their faith, Sarah herself is mentioned ; and her faith is said to have been instrumental to the accomplishment of that very promise, which in the first instance she had disbelieved. And how many have found similar reason to bless God for the fidelity of their friends, or for the inward rebukes of their own consciences ! *Bush.*——A question had been asked that made Sarah serious : "Is anything too hard for JEHOVAH?" When Sarah heard that question she wished to disown her laughter and to fall in the hands of the LORD. J. P.

At length, in the faith of both his parents, there was present the prerequisite condition for Isaac's supernatural conception. His birth was announced to take place at the recurrence of the same season next year. But before it took place, this divine visitation in mercy was to be set in contrast with a divine visitation in judgment. The calm of the patriarchal home was speedily to be invaded with tidings of horror, and the bright hopes which had dawned upon the race of Abraham crossed by a lurid glare, when He who had descended in favor upon Mamre descended in vengeance upon Sodom. *Dykes.*

**16. Rose up.** Consider the progress of the history from this point. The three men rise up and turn their steps toward Sodom. On the way they stand still ; and He who already had spoken as the Lord Jehovah, announces to Abraham His purpose to inquire into the cry which had come up to Him from Sodom. The two angels then turn toward Sodom (19 : 1) ; while the third, the Lord, remains and listens to Abraham's entreaty for the city. The two angels arrive at Lot's house, pass the night there, and declare that the Lord had sent them to destroy the city : in the morning, they lead him out. Here the third, the Lord Himself, comes to them (19 : 17). Lot, who did not yet know them, appeals to the whole three for a particular mercy (ver. 18), but only *one* out of the three answers him, and speaks now in His own name ; and thereupon, as Jehovah, he rains down fire and brimstone out of heaven from the Lord (Jehovah), ver. 21–25. *Gerl.*

**17. Shall I hide from Abraham.** All the principles of the divine Providence in its relations to the sins of men appear here : his forbearance and patience, his constant notice, the deciding test, and the strictness and righteousness of the judgment ; and hence Abraham is told here, that these same principles might operate upon the minds of the people of God in all ages. *Gosman.*

**18, 19.** *Three points* are contained in the promises given to Abraham. 1. The land in which he himself continues all his life a stranger, and where he must even buy a place for his grave, is to be given for an eternal possession to his descendants. 2. He who remains childless till his old age shall have an *innumerable posterity*, which is guaranteed by the changing of his name into Abraham [father of a multitude] ; and not Ishmael, the son of Hagar, who was born after the counsel of man, but *Isaac*, born contrary to the ways of nature, according to God's counsel, is to be the bearer and inherit-

or of the promise. 3. The seed of Abraham shall be made a *blessing* for all races and all nations of the earth. Still the electing grace of the covenant God, who calls himself *El-Shaddai* (the Almighty God), as a witness of his controlling power in the natural world, is met on Abraham s side by *faith*, which does not look at the course of nature, but holds fast to God's word of promise, and endures victoriously the severest test in his willingness to offer the son of the promise. In this faith, which is reckoned to him for righteousness, Abraham the friend of God is the prophet, to whom is granted insight into the divine counsel ("Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?") when Sodom reels onward to judgment, and who has the privilege of free access to God in prayer. Nay, he becomes the father of all believers, and his name stands at the head of the three monotheistic religions of the world (Jewish, Mohammedan, and Christian), even when looked at in a purely historical way. But this knowledge of the divine way is to be accompanied by a *walking* therein (Gen. 17 : 1). Moreover, according to verse 19, Jehovah "acknowledged," that is, chose, Abraham, "that he might command his sons after him to keep Jehovah's ways, doing justice and right, that Jehovah might bring upon Abraham all that He has said of him." O.——Blessings are secured to him only if he and his seed after him walk in the ways of Jehovah, in obedience to the covenant. He is therefore to instruct his household and his children in these ways, and to see to it that they remain faithful to the covenant. If they forsake the ways of Jehovah and choose to walk in those of the heathen, the same judgment which had been executed on the Gentiles would also overtake them. Thus the communication of Jehovah's purpose in reference to Sodom is at the same time a solemn and telling warning addressed to Abraham and to his posterity. K.

Occasions will arise when parental authority must accompany parental prayers and precepts, if we would walk in the steps of faithful Abraham. In particular, everything that dishonors God, no less than that which is injurious to society, must be opposed with determined vigor. The economy of the household should be so ordered as to carry the conviction to their minds that the knowledge, the love, and the service of God is the great business of life, to which everything else is to be subservient. *Bush.*——Parental fidelity and authority ; the early culture and training of his household ; consecration, the prayer and the faith which are legitimately begotten of this covenant and naturally correlated to it ;—these are obviously the fitting conditions upon which the fulfilment of this covenant on God's part must depend. But, oh, the wealth of blessings garnered up within its bosom for those who walk in the steps of Abraham with like precious faith and like godly nurture ! How wonderfully does piety become self-perpetuating in the family line from generation to generation of those who take this covenant to their inmost heart and find God in it ever faithful and ever true and evermore "mighty to save," as he hath said ! H. C.——God having made the covenant with him and his seed, and his household being circumcised, pursuant to that, he was to teach and rule them well. Those that expect family-blessings must make conscience of family-duty. If our children be the Lord's, they must be nursed for him ; if they wear his livery, they must be trained up in his work. Abraham not only took care of his children, but of his household. The poorest servants have precious souls that must be looked after. Abraham made it his care and business to promote practical religion in his family. H. ——God's plan includes Abraham's fidelity to the covenant ; and as it is a household covenant, embracing his seed after him, so it binds him to be a faithful father and householder. This is the process by which God will accomplish his plan of grace, and the means are secured as well as the end. Family religion is God's method for propagating his church. He therefore makes the covenant and its seals of a household nature ; and thus the church has always been extended by means of a pious posterity. *Jacobus.*

It was the simple, massive, serene character of Abraham which kept him so steady to his ideas, and which gave him his peculiar power to keep others steady also. We seem to see one of such rectitude and majesty of will that he himself moved, and moved all around him, easily, in the line which the finger of God had marked. Of all models for the prosperous men of this century Abraham is the finest,—laying hold on life with so powerful a grasp, yet confessing that he was "a stranger and a pilgrim." *Mercer.*

Under the Patriarchal dispensation each head of a single family was at once prince and priest of his own people ; offering sacrifices in their behalf and leading their simple worship, privileged to receive personal communications from God and to expect special guidance of his providence and grace. These intimate personal relations with God proved to these early saints a means of spiritual training of marvellous power. The Patriarchal dispensation was appointed to

lay deep and broad the foundations of the Church for all coming time. The Church of God rests on two corner-stones : piety in the individual man, and family religion by which the piety of the fathers is perpetuated in their children. The office of the Patriarchal Dispensation was to develop and establish forever these two foundations of the future Church, personal holiness and family religion. Of both these principles, Abraham was the most perfect example under this early dispensation. . . . So under the Christian dispensation, the father is prince and priest of his household. He must minister at the family altar, bearing upon his own soul to the mercy-seat the burden of their sins and sorrows and needs. He must command his children that they keep the way of the Lord. And with him also if faithful, as with faithful Abraham, will God enter into an unfailing covenant, which shall bring blessings untold to his children of generations yet unborn. *E. L. Clark.*

As soon as prophecy found a receptacle in the chosen race it grew strong, it became an architect and builder, it raised institutions, it enacted ordinances. In Abraham it founded a family, in Moses it framed a law, in David it erected a kingdom. The Jewish people from the first gave prophecy a fixed home, and the nation became the depository for the sacred gift. The Jewish Church maintained and kept up the inspired expectation, protecting it, and surrounding it with institutions and schools ; so that, preserved as a directing influence among them, it prepared a practical reception for the Messiah ; and founded that body of thought in the nation which welcomed him who fulfilled the promise when he came, and in that welcome founded the Christian Church. Prophecy thus proved itself an instrument of real efficiency and power. In Abraham himself we see the foundation of that strong external structure,—that law, that system, and that discipline,—which was to act as the depository of the prophetic promise ; we see it in the fact that he founded a family, and bound that family by precepts and regulations which enabled it to preserve and hand down the true faith. Scripture gives him a character somewhat akin to that of an ancient law-giver, representing him as laying down rules and imparting a particular mould and type to his family, providing for its future instruction and worship, and treating it not merely *as a family* but as an *institution.* It hardly appears too bold to say that this text (vs. 17–19) is a description of more than the head of a family, that it represents the founder of a religious community, whose future adherence to the true faith he was anxious to secure by proper regulations. *Mozley.*

**18. All nations blessed.** Even here, when God affords the greatest proof of His friendship for Abraham, the reason why He so distinguishes him is this—because through him shall all the people of the earth be blessed. In order to show him how blessed a thing it is to serve the true and living God, and to stand in the relation of childlike intercourse with Him (a blessing which is granted to all those who are blessed through Abraham), God makes known His purpose to him as to an intimate friend. *Gerl.*——Hence we find, in subsequent revelations, that Abraham is spoken of as peculiarly the "friend of God." So in Jehoshaphat's prayer (2 Chron. 20 : 17) : "Thou gavest this land to the seed of Abraham *thy friend* forever." So by the prophet Isaiah (12 : 8) Jehovah declares : "Thou Israel art my servant, the seed of *Abraham my friend.*" And the apostle James, speaking of the offering of Isaac, remarks : "And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness ; and *he was called the friend of God.*" S. P.

Abraham speaks to God, and God to Abraham, as a man speaks to his friend ; and it seems almost as if the innocent time were brought back when God walked "in the garden in the cool of the day." It was this peculiar nearness and confidence which gave Abraham the name of "the Friend of God,"—"El Khalil," *the Friend*, as the common Arab calls him to-day. *Mercer.* ——Men have sometimes communed with gods, genii, and departed heroes, but not with God, the one God of heaven and earth, in a way so calm and trusting. The stranger has no other friend than He who had brought him into this remoteness ; but Him he possesses as the Friend of friends. What tender passages are there in the intercourse of God with him ; how he comforts, directs, cheers him with future hopes ; gives him, now, the pledge of a covenant, now, the sign of friendship, now, a new name, now, symbols to impress his heart, and demands now this, now that, return of love to Himself. *Herder.*

**20, 21.** Abraham is destined to be a great nation and a blessing to all nations ; for *I have known, i.e., acknowledged him* (chosen him in anticipative love, as in Amos 3 : 2 ; Hos. 13 : 4), that he may command his whole posterity to keep the way of Jehovah, to practise justice and righteousness, that all the promises may be fulfilled in them. God then disclosed to Abraham what he was about to do to Sodom and

Gomorrah, because Jehovah had chosen him to be the father of the people of God, in order that, by instructing his descendants in the fear of God, he might lead them in the paths of righteousness, so that they might become partakers of the promised salvation, and not be overtaken by judgment. The destruction of Sodom and the surrounding cities was to be a permanent memorial, to keep the fate of the ungodly constantly before the mind of Israel. To this end Jehovah explained to Abraham the cause of their destruction in the clearest manner possible, that he might not only be convinced of the justice of the divine government, but might learn, that, when the measure of iniquity was full, no intercession could avert the judgment,—a lesson and a warning to his descendants also. *Keil.*

**20. The cry of Sodom.** The cry of sins for punishment. It is applicable to every sin as expressive of *the moral demand which it makes for punishment;* for every sin has a voice of crimination against the sinner, and its *crying* intimates the fixed, necessary, and righteous connection (Gen. 4 : 10), which is established between transgression and punishment. *Bush.*

**21. Will know.** The perfect justice of God, the exact weighing of all which men have done, is in a most striking manner represented in this expression. God places the Sodomites on their trial. The trial was not needful for His information ; but it is needful that every sin should be brought to light, to be either blotted out or punished. *Gerl.*——In this passage God speaks after the manner of men ; using the language of a good judge, who never passes sentence, much less executes it, till he hath examined the cause. *Kidder.*——Jehovah could not be uncertain whether the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah contained the truth ; but it was still a question whether Sodom, by its conduct against the last deciding visitation of God, would show that its corruption placed it beyond any help or salvation. It must become evident through its last trial, whether it has reached the limit of the long-suffering patience of God. *Lange.* ——**Whether they have done altogether.** Heb., *whether they have made completeness,*—made a finish (of their sins), filled the measure. *Jacobus.*

**23–33.** Abraham intercedes for Sodom. He puts forward the plea of justice to the righteous in behalf of the city. He ventures to repeat his intervention six times, every time diminishing the number of the righteous whom he supposes to be in it. The patience of the Lord is no less remarkable than the perseverance of Abraham. In every case he grants his petition. M. ——Six times he intercedes, with such earnestness and heartfelt yearning, that in his great anguish and desire he utters almost foolish words. But it is a most precious prayer, if you judge of it by the attitude of his heart ; for it was a very violent emotion and profound importunity. There was more in the holy man's heart than that heart could understand and feel. I am sure tears ran down his face, and his words passed into unspeakable sighs. *Luther.*

He trembles as he plants each footstep in advance, yet, love-impelled, he cannot but proceed. He fears to offend, yet he fears still more to let a last chance be lost of averting the awful judgment. Earnestly, tremblingly, on and on he goes, reducing first by fives and then by tens the number, till at last he stops, overwhelmed with the impression that the Divine grace has triumphed over the human importunity, and satisfied that the Judge of all the earth will certainly do right. Wonderful specimen this of an intercession coming from a heart filled to overflow with the desire to see God's character vindicated and the happiness of his creatures, even the worst of them, secured ! Can we doubt that it was this singular union of pure compassion for human suffering with a supreme regard for righteousness, a care for the Divine honor with resignation to the Divine will, that won for it the audience of that ear which heard in it from afar a faint echo of that most wonderful intercession that ever came from human lips—" Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do" ? W. H.

How *fervently* does this righteous man pray, this friend of God and friend of man, when he has once taken on him to speak unto the Lord as a man speaketh unto his friend ! Of his prayer, a clear knowledge of the will and being of God is the basis : in his God he beholds the Judge of the whole earth, who cannot possibly do aught but justice. Humility is the key-note to this prayer. It evinces unshaken confidence in a wisdom, a holiness, a love and power, whose ways were different, but yet infinitely higher and better, than the ways and thoughts of men. It is characterized by a perseverance which from every renewed promise borrows higher courage for a new and bolder demand ; but at the same time by a thorough submissior to the will of God, when the utmost limit has been reached which the long-suffering One can assign to His sentence. No marvel, truly, that this prayer, looking at the result, *availed much.* It did not, indeed, save Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction ; there were not found therein

even ten righteous men. But not the less it guided Lot and his household out of Sodom to Zoar : for the sake of Abraham the family was preserved, of which he had not even mentioned the name. And, above all, through this prayer Abraham was himself bound in closer union to Jehovah ; God's good pleasure in His servant was heightened ; and after centuries it still speaks to us and countless others of our most glorious privilege and our most sacred duty. *Van O.*

**25. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?** This very question is itself a tribute to the righteousness of God. And the course which God took in answering it shows that he has ever held it of the first consequence to secure the moral approbation of his creatures. In many things he has transcended their *reason;* in nearly all things he has baffled and even confounded and mocked their *speculations;* but in all instances he has been most careful not to excite controversy against himself in the human *conscience.* If it could once enter the mind of man that God has done *wrong,* that is to say has acted *unjustly,* man would be in a position to vindicate the most strenuous rebellion against his government. It is true, indeed, that we may come upon many things, even in moral government, which we can neither understand nor explain ; but if where we *can* enter into God's purpose, and the method of its execution, we are enabled to see that *righteousness* is the habitation of God's throne, we are entitled to give our conscience rest in cases which are to our reason inscrutable. J. P.—— It is a wonderful confirmation of man's right to reason from the most certain intuitions of his own moral being to the character and ways of Him Who made man, that Jehovah neither resented nor disappointed the appeal of His servant. To each successive question He returned a calm assent : "I will not do it for the sake of so many." As far as the courage or the justice of the man made bold to go, God's higher and more merciful justice went along with him. *Dykes.*

**32. I will not destroy it for ten's sake.** A wonderful representation of the tender mercy of the Most High ; who condescended to grant a reprieve to the whole country for the sake of a few righteous, could they have been found in it. And His mercy was still greater, even beyond Abraham's desire ; for He spared one of the five cities, for the sake of three or four persons : as we read (chap. 19 : 20, 21). Abraham makes no express mention of Lot in any of the foregoing petitions but it is plain from chap. 19 : 29 that he was in his thoughts, which God knew : and he is comprehended in those words at the 23d verse of this chapter, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" *Patrick.*——Every corrupt man is not only an enemy to himself, but an enemy to his family and to his country, by contributing to swell the tide of national guilt, which will not fail to end in national calamity, whenever the measure of the iniquity of the individuals that compose the community shall come to the full. *Hales.*

*How cautiously, yet how hopefully, Abraham's prayer enlarged itself!* From fifty to forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty, to ten ! A whole city would have been spared for the sake of ten righteous men. Here we see a great principle in the government of God. We are sparing others, or are being spared for their sakes. J. P.

**33.** Abraham left off asking before God left off granting ; and though the particular object of his petitions was not accorded to him, yet the avowed conditions on which it *would* have been granted show that no limits, but such as a concern for his own honor induced God to fix, can be assigned to the exercise of his grace in answer to his people's prayers. *Bush.*——God granted Abraham's prayer so far as he ventured to extend it. We know not what would have been the answer, had he gone further. But we have here the highest encouragement for intercessory prayer, – to plead with God for wicked men, for communities and nations that are far gone in sin. Abraham received no denial. So far as we can see, it was he who left off, and not God. Yet we are to rest humbly and trustfully upon God's good pleasure, after all our prayer. *Jacobus.*——The importunity which believers use in their addresses to God, is such, that if they were dealing with a man like themselves, they could not but fear that he would be angry with them. But he with whom we have to do is *God and not man;* and however he may seem, is not really *angry with the prayers of the upright* (Ps. 80 : 4), for they are *his delight* (Prov. 15 : 8), and he is pleased when he is wrestled with.

*Abraham returned unto his place,* not puffed up with the honor done him, nor by these extraordinary interviews taken off from the ordinary course of duty ; he returned to his place, to observe what the event would be ; and it proved that his prayer was heard, and yet Sodom not spared, because there were not ten righteous in it. We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God. H.——"Abraham returned to his place," and it was now the after-

noon. The people of Sodom little knew what a conversation they had been the subject of. The vain and wicked little know, or think, or care, what fear the devout and righteous may be entertaining for them, or what intercessory supplications they may be making - and if they did know, many of them would but scorn such fears and prayers. There was to be in Sodom something that was to be saved in the hour of vengeance, to mark in a signal manner the contrast; to show how infallibly the righteous Governor distinguishes;—and what value he sets on the fidelity that will not conform to the surrounding wickedness. J. F.

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*The Patriarchal Dispensation.* The Greek word *Patriarch* (the *father-ruler*) gives a fuller etymological expression to the idea which was at first essential to the simpler Hebrew word, at the time when the *father* was, by the right of nature, the *ruler* of the whole community formed by his living descendants. In sacred history the term is commonly applied to the descendants of Adam, through the line of Abraham, down to the time of Moses. The whole plan of God's moral government and revelation of himself before the giving of the Mosaic Law constitutes the *Patriarchal Dispensation*, which Paul expressly distinguishes by the phrase "until the law," and defines as "from Adam to Moses." Its peculiar characteristics were the direct and intimate communion of God with his people, and their government by a moral system, the great principles of which were well understood, though not yet reduced to a code of laws. It was an experiment of moral government in the simple and beautiful form of family harmony. Its ideal is expressed in the words —"I have known Abraham, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment."

The patriarchal dispensation may be divided into three stages. (1.) When our first parents had fallen from their primitive state of innocence, they were placed, by the promise of a deliverer, in a condition still to trust in the mercy of God, and to choose between a life of humble obedience to him, and self-willed opposition against him; and the observance of sacrifices of blood seems to have been an outward sign distinguishing the followers of these two courses. The distinction was seen in the personal characters of Cain and Abel, and in the family characters of the Cainites and the Sethites; but before long the latter also were corrupted by their union with the former—the sons of God intermarrying with the daughters of men—and the general result was an almost universal experiment on God's forbearance. (2.) This state of things was ended by the Deluge, after which the experiment of godly obedience and patriarchal order was renewed under the fresh conditions laid down by the covenant with Noah, insuring the divine forbearance till the end of time But when the prospect of judgment was thus removed far off, sin assumed new courage; the Babel-builders made the daring attempt to render themselves independent of Jehovah: nations were founded on those godless principles which have ever since prevailed in the "kingdoms of this world." This was the very consummation of rebellion against the patriarchal dispensation; while the authority with which it invested the father of the family was claimed, as it has been to our own day, for the despot and usurper. Idolatry was established in all these kingdoms; and the pure worship of Jehovah was alone preserved, or perhaps we should rather say, retaught to man, in connection with the true model of patriarchal government, in the one family, which was chosen to wander about as nomads, living under tents, amid the nations with whom as yet they shared no earthly inheritance. (3.) It is in this third stage that we see the general form and spirit of the patriarchal life. Of the social life of the Antediluvian Patriarchs, and even of the Postdiluvian Patriarchs before Abraham, we know next to nothing; but when we turn to the pictures of Abraham dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promises; of the other branch of the family at Haran; of the conflicts between Sarah and Hagar on behalf of Ishmael and Isaac, and between Esau and Jacob themselves for the right of inheritance; of Isaac and Jacob blessing their children before they died; and of the varied relations between the sons of Israel and their families—in these and many other scenes we see the working of the patriarchal system with sufficient distinctness to trace its leading principles. P. S.

# Section 46.

## SODOM DESTROYED. LOT SAVED.

GENESIS 19 : 1-28.

1 AND the two angels came to Sodom at even ; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom : and Lot
2 saw them, and rose up to meet them , and he bowed himself with his face to the earth ; and
he said, Behold now, my lords, turn aside, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all
night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your way. And they said,
3 Nay ; but we will abide in the street all night. And he urged them greatly ; and they turned
in unto him, and entered into his house ; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened
4 bread, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of
Sodom, compassed the house round, both young and old, all the people from every quarter ;
5 and they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this
6 night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out unto them to
7 the door, and shut the door after him. And he said, I pray you, my brethren, do not so
8 wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man ; let me, I pray
you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes : only unto these men
9 do nothing ; forasmuch as they are come under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand
back. And they said, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge : now
will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even
10 Lot, and drew near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and brought Lot
11 into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door
of the house with blindness, both small and great : so that they wearied themselves to find
12 the door. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons,
13 and thy daughters, and whomsoever thou hast in the city ; bring them out of the place : for
we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the LORD ; and the
14 LORD hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which
married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place ; for the LORD will destroy the
15 city. But he seemed unto his sons in law as one that mocked And when the morning arose,
then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are
16 here ; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. But he lingered ; and the men laid
hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters ;
the LORD being merciful unto him : and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.
17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy
life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the Plain ; escape to the mountain, lest
18 thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my lord : behold now, thy servant
19 hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed
unto me in saving my life ; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest evil overtake me, and I
20 die : behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one : Oh, let me escape
21 thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have
accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow the city of which thou hast
22 spoken. Haste thee, escape thither ; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither.
23 Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot
24 came unto Zoar. Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire
25 from the LORD out of heaven ; and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the
26 inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back
27 from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham got up early in the morning
28 to the place where he had stood before the LORD : and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah,
and toward all the land of the Plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the land went up as
the smoke of a furnace.

The two strangers who entered the gate of Sodom on the evening before its fall had dined with Abraham that day upon the heights of Mamre. The mission of these celestial visitors had for its first object, as we have seen, the annunciation of glad tidings to Abraham's wife ;

its second was to visit Sodom with judgment. So impartially do Heaven's messengers execute alike its mercy and its severity. *Dykes.*——The gain of this world is but transitory ; faith reaps a late but lasting recompense. The Angels of God descended to fulfil in one and the same mission a double purpose ;—to take from Lot his earthly portion, and to prepare for the accomplishment of the everlasting blessings promised to Abraham ; to destroy Sodom, while they foretold the approaching birth of Isaac. *Newman.*

**1. At even, Lot sat in the gate of Sodom.** We can imagine the setting sun for the last time, throwing a mild and softened radiance on the cities and across the plain ; and no warning by elemental disorder. Nature keeps the secret of her great Governor. If *conscience* will not alarm the sinners, nothing else shall. But what was there *latent* in that soft tranquillity? There was there the hovering power of divine justice –the spirit of retribution, just growing to the intensity to reveal itself in resistless flame. J. F.

**Gate.** The covered doorways, and the piazzas adjoining (such are to be seen in modern fortified towns), were in ancient times usual places of concourse, where the inhabitants met for amusement, or to transact public business, especially the administration of justice. *Gerl.* ——At first the tent of Lot was only pitched near the gate of Sodom. By and by he abandoned tent-life altogether, and inhabited a house in the city. At last he betrothed his girls to native Sodomites, and sat in its gateway as one of its conspicuous citizens at a time when the cry of its pollutions had gone up to heaven. *Dykes.*

**2.** When our Saviour made as though He would have gone farther, He effectually questioned His disciples as to the condition of their hearts in relation to the duties of hospitality. The angels, in answering that they would abide in the street all night, made the same experiment on Lot. This species of simulation involves no falsehood ; its design is not to deceive, but to catechize or instruct. The whole action is to be regarded as a sign by which a question is proposed, or the mind excited to such a degree of curiosity and attention that lessons of truth can be successfully imparted. The command to Abraham to sacrifice his son involved a series of practical interrogatories to which no other form of proposing them could have elicited such satisfactory responses. The principle holds here which obtains in reference to fictions and fables. The action is only the dress of the thought, and where the purpose in view is honorable and just, no exceptions can be taken on the score of veracity to the drapery in which it is adorned. *Thornwell.*

**4, 5.** The utter shamelessness of the inhabitants of Sodom, as well as their unbridled licentiousness, is briefly but most emphatically expressed in these verses. The Canaanitish nations in general, and the cities of the plain especially, were addicted to those deadly sins so strictly forbidden to the Israelites. E. H. B. ——It was the most unnatural and abominable wickedness that they were now set upon, a sin that still bears their name, and is called *sodomy.* They were carried headlong by those vile affections (Rom. 1 : 26, 27), which are worse than brutish, and the eternal reproach of the human nature, and which cannot be thought of without horror, by those that have the least spark of virtue, and any remains of natural light and conscience. They proclaimed war with virtue, and bid open defiance to it. Hence daring sinners are said to *declare their sin as Sodom* (Is. 3 : 9). H.

**6–8.** The good man craves and pleads the laws of hospitality ; and when he sees headstrong purposes of mischief, chooses rather to be an ill father than an ill host : his intention was good, but his offer was faulty ; if through his allowance the Sodomites had defiled his daughters, it had been his sin ; if through violence they had defiled his guests, it had been only theirs : there can be no warrant for us to sin, lest others should sin : it is for God to prevent sins with judgments, it is not for men to prevent a greater sin with a less : God meant better to Lot, than to suffer his weak offer to be accepted. *Bp. H.*

**6.** In defence of the sacred rights of a guest, Lot even risked his own life ; the one flash of manly spirit which redeems in any measure the story of that night. But in his very hospitality Lot betrayed how the air of Sodom had blunted his sense of personal purity. *Dykes.*——The sacred writer relates the history simply and without comment, not holding up Lot as an example for imitation, but telling his faults as well as his virtues, and leaving us to draw the inferences. He brought all his troubles on himself by the home he had chosen. He was bound to defend his guests at the risk of his own life, but not by the sacrifice of his daughters. E. H. B.

**10, 11.** Now Lot's guests begin to show themselves angels, and first delivered Lot in Sodom, then from Sodom ; first strike them with blindness, whom they will after consume

with fire. How little did the Sodomites think that vengeance was so near them! While they went groping in the streets, and cursing those whom they could not find, Lot with the angels is in secure light, and sees them miserable, and foresees them burning. It is the use of God, to blind and besot those whom he means to destroy. *Bp. H.*

**15.** The prophet Ezekiel (16 : 49) enumerates these three causes of the sins of Sodom, "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness." And how they are still the parents of vice in prosperous communities we know full well. It shows how widespread and inveterate the wickedness of the community was, that when the fiery deluge came down, not one beyond Lot's family was counted worthy to escape. *Kerr.*

**16.** "He lingered;" whether from some degree of unbelief; or from being confused and stupefied with amazement and horror. But there was calmness and decision there, though he had none. The angels laid hold on the hands of Lot and his family, "The Lord being merciful unto him," and led them out of the devoted city. All this might well be named *visible providence.* It was the protection of the Almighty, and the guardian care of his angels displayed in exercise,—in the visible personal agency of these powerful spirits. But, though there be *now* no such *palpable* manifestations, how often may there be in a good man's life interpositions as critical, if the agency were made visible in any one of many conjunctures. And then for his soul there is a series of agency of a still far nobler kind! A greater Spirit is employed there! J. F.

**17. He said, Escape for thy life.** Hebrew, *for thy soul.* Chaldean, "Pity thine own soul, and save thyself." It would seem that a new speaker, even the Angel-Jehovah, who had by this time left Abraham and joined the two angels at Sodom, utters these words. The tenor of the ensuing narrative makes it clear that the personage called Jehovah was present at the overthrow of Sodom, and that it was no other than he who sustains the character of chief speaker in the discourses recorded. *Bush.*——*One speaks* with Lot. *They* lead him out, but *He* speaks to him. Here has the Lord, or *the* appointed Angel of the Lord, His coequal Revealer, again joined the other two. Lot recognizes Him as the first among them; since, while he directs his words to all three, he speaks yet but with One, whom he addresses by the name of God, "Lord;" and He now declares in His own name what He will do. *Gerl.*

**Escape to the mountain.** Such as these are the commands given to those who through grace are delivered out of a sinful state and condition. Return not to sin and Satan, for that is looking back to Sodom. Rest not in self and the world, for that is staying in the plain. And reach toward Christ and Heaven, for that is escaping to the mountain, short of which we must not take up. H.——In the conduct of the angel messengers of mercy and of wrath on this occasion, you see symbolized the style and manner of the Gospel warning and of the Gospel offers wherever the Gospel comes in contact with sinful men. It is ever, as here, in the tone of hasteful urgency. "Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city; escape for thy life; tarry not in all the plain." S. R.

**20.** It was Lot's weakness to think a city of his own choosing safer than the mountain of God's appointing. And he argued against himself, when he pleaded, *Thou hast magnified thy mercy in saving my life, and I cannot escape to the mountain;* for could not he that had plucked him out of Sodom, when he lingered, carry him safe to the mountain, though he began to tire?

**21.** See what favor God showed a true saint, though weak. Zoar was spared to gratify him. Though his intercession for it was not, as Abraham's for Sodom, from a principle of generous charity, but merely from self-interest, yet God granted his request, to show how much the prayer of a righteous man avails. Sodom's ruin was suspended, till he was safe. H.——Oh the large bounty of God, which reacheth not to us only, but to ours! God saves Lot for Abraham's sake, and Zoar for Lot's sake; if Sodom had not been too wicked, it had escaped: were it not for God's dear children, that are intermixed with the world, it could not stand: the wicked owe their lives unto those few good, whom they hate and persecute.

**23, 24.** Now at once the sun rises upon Zoar, and fire falls down upon Sodom: Abraham stands upon the hill, and sees the cities burning; it is fair weather with God's children, when it is foulest with the wicked. Those, which burned with the fire of lust, are now consumed with the fire of vengeance: they sinned against nature; and now against the course of nature, fire descends from heaven, and consumes them. *Bp. H.*——Long time the hand of the Almighty may seem to tremble, as if adverse to strike. But He is only waiting for the day—that fixed and appointed day—to which, as the Apostle Peter says, the ungodly are reserved. Once "the sun is risen upon Zoar," at the ap-

pointed day the blow descends with terrible decision. There is no relenting then with the judge of all the earth. If he waits to be gracious till it seems as if he knew not how to smite, he smites at last as if he knew not how to pity. Not, indeed, in sudden anger, but in the calmness of deliberate judgment he awards the punishment to which the wicked are reserved. Up to the very last moment of the day of grace all things continue as they are. But the last sunrise comes at length Such is the view of the justice of God here brought out ; and this picture is but the type and illustration, says Jesus Christ – a rehearsing on a smaller stage of the general judgment which shall at last burn up the earth itself and "melt the elements with fervent heat." S. R.——It is the Son who has executed judgment from the beginning : overthrowing the proud tower of Babel, and confounding men's languages ; punishing the whole world by the violence of waters ; raining upon Sodom and Gomorrah fire and brimstone, the LORD FROM THE LORD. *Tertullian.*——And the neighboring cities, Admah and Zeboim as appears from Deut. 29 : 23. *Bp. Patrick.*

The *overwhelming destruction* produced is set forth in language which enumerates the cities themselves, their inhabitants, the whole surrounding region, and all the rich verdure with which the country had been previously clothed. It is said that "God overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." The *extensiveness* of the catastrophe is implied in what Abraham beheld, when, early the next morning, he looked toward Sodom from one of the eminences about Hebron. At the distance of more than thirty miles from the probable site of Sodom, he saw the smoke of the whole country of the plain going up "as the smoke of a furnace." N. C. B.——For its awful suddenness, for its thoroughness, and for its perpetual tokens, this ancient overthrow stands forth in history as the appointed type of all divine acts of judgment ; and chiefly of that last act to which we now look forward, and for which it is every man's wisdom to prepare himself. This dreadful office it continued to fill down to the close of revelation. For the smoke of Sodom flings its shadow even across the predictions of our Lord, to heighten the impressiveness of that picture which the Judge Himself in His mercy sketched beforehand of His day of inquisition and of wrath. *Dykes.*

**25. All the Plain.** The entire plain no doubt possessed originally the same fertility which afterward made the adjacent Jericho one of the loveliest and richest spots in Syria. Fed by the Jordan and the springs which send down streams to it from the sheltering hills, a copious supply of water could easily be led by artificial conduits to any part of the district ; and the almost tropical heat of that deep depression must have forced, then as now, a luxuriance and variety of vegetation which are to be found nowhere else on the same parallel of latitude. *Dykes.*——Think of a region blooming and smiling in all the riches of nature ; on every hand something to raise the contemplative thought to the glorious Creator ; something, it might be supposed, to refine and harmonize the sentiments ; and a copious fertility of supply, to make every tract speak the bounty of Providence. But amidst all this, *what was* MAN ? A hideous assemblage of beings, "sensual—devilish," such as might almost be conceived to have been thrown up from the infernal realms, to go down again in an earthquake and tempest of fire ! J. F.——There is not another country on the face of the globe where blessing or curse might so readily be realized, as a space so narrow does not, in any other part, present so numerous sources either of the one or of the other. The almost Paradisiacal valley of Siddim becomes in one day a pool of destruction, whence everything that has life flees ; thus showing the solemnity of Divine judgments to all succeeding generations. K.

The people of Sodom had no time for speculations ; there was but just time for terror, and conscience, and despair ! Our Lord says, there is a still greater guilt and a more awful destruction, even than theirs ! They will see greater criminals than themselves at the last day ; and from lands where the fire of heaven did *not* fall ! The man that lives and dies rejecting HIM had better have been exposed to the rain of fire and brimstone, and gone down in the horrid gulf of the Vale of Siddim ! J. F.——Love has a side of wrath and is a consuming flame by its very nature when turned against that which resists it and is alien to it. Every force in the universe and everything great and conserving in the nature and the soul of man becomes such a fire when threatened by that which is opposed to it. The greatest men have been those who have shown this most—Cromwell, Luther, Pascal, John, Paul, and, more terribly and mightily than all, in Christ himself. With what withering denunciations he condemned whatever was false and ugly in character ! What a curse was that pronounced upon the offending cities of Bethsaida and Chorazin, and the worldly and conceited Pharisees ! Was

the heart of Christ less full of tenderness and truth because it was as a flame of fire when he confronted the unbelief and pride and worldly ambition of those who would resist and destroy his good works? And so it is that God over all, who is represented to us in Christ, and in nature and the highest soul of man, is a consuming fire. Blot that out? You may tear it out from your Bible, but you cannot tear it out from the universe! R. S. S.

**26. His wife looked back, and became a pillar of salt.** From love to her former abode, and from unbelief she would not abstain from disobedience to God's commands. She remained standing. The sulphur blast overtook her, and like all the country round she was enveloped in an encrustation of salt. *Gerl.* ——Small precepts from God are of importance; obedience is as well tried, and disobedience as well punished, in little, as in much: his wife doth but turn back her head, whether in curiosity, or unbelief, or love and compassion of the place; she is turned into a monument of disobedience: what doth it avail her not to be turned into ashes in Sodom, when she is turned into a pillar of salt in the plain! He, that saved a whole city, cannot save his own wife. *Bp. H.*——Behold the goodness and severity of God; toward Lot that went forward, goodness; toward his wife that looked back, severity. Though she was nearly related to a righteous man, though better than her neighbors, and though a monument of distinguishing mercy in her deliverance out of Sodom, yet God did not connive at her disobedience; for great privileges will not secure us from the wrath of God, if we do not carefully and faithfully improve them. Her *looking* back bespoke an inclination to *go* back; and therefore our Saviour uses it as a warning against apostasy from our Christian profession. We have all renounced the world and the flesh, and have set our faces heavenward; we are in the plain, upon our probation; and it is at our peril, if we return into the interests we profess to have abandoned. Drawing back is *to* perdition, and looking back is *toward* it. *Let us therefore fear.* H.

This is the strangest and saddest of all the delusions and inconsistencies of fallen humanity, this believing the word of God's messengers and yet dallying with the message! It is not so wonderful that the men of Sodom refuse to listen; it is but in harmony with their stolid unbelief. It is not so wonderful that Lot's sons-in-law refuse to listen, for they are confirmed infidels. But it is passing wonderful that Lot's wife—warned, and believing the warning, alarmed, moved to escape, yea, brought by the hand of God himself to the very verge of safety—should linger, disobey, look back and perish! And just so still, the strangest of all the inconsistencies of sinners, is that of him "who, often reproved, hardeneth his neck and shall be utterly destroyed, and that without remedy." S. R ——There is no time for loitering Sodom was intended to show that; where one faithless soul, by loitering, was lost. Let no man therefore deceive himself with any vain expectation, that though he is not such as he could wish at present, he shall be so at some future time: that if he is not prepared to meet his God now, he shall be so before he dies. This is the delusion under which so many perish. The broad way is crowded with people, who intended to grow better, but never did. When once they fix this habit of loitering, as they live, they die. *Jones of N.*

*The right of destruction* may be fairly inquired into by human reason, and ought to be well studied as a fact that has been repeatedly realized in human history. Throughout the Bible, God has reserved to himself the right to take back whatever he has given, because all his gifts have been offered upon conditions about which there can be no mistake. He takes back the life of the body; he takes away the power of reason; he reclaims our physical strength; by many a severity he asserts that the earth is his own and the fulness thereof; yet we are to suppose that he cannot put an end to our existence; it has grieved him, mocked him, defied him, abandoned his sanctuary, violated his laws, slain his Son, quenched his Spirit, given the lie to his promises and heaped up the measure of its iniquity in his very face, but he cannot put an end to it! Not such is the doctrine of the Word of God. There the Lord is King; his power is infinite; he *only* has the *right* to live; he *only* does live, and if *we* live it is because we abide in him, "as a branch abideth in the vine." The sovereignty of God is as absolute at the end as at the beginning; "he can create, and he can destroy;" and we live by his will alone. Furthermore, we can see the infinite reasonableness and justice of this sovereignty; it subdues all things under the Lord's feet, and gives him an undivided throne. . . . We hold life as God's gift upon certain conditions; we can choose good or we can choose evil; God loves us, cares for us, has given his Son to save us, and is watching us every moment; he wishes all men to be saved; he promises pardon to the penitent, and foretells the death of the impenitent sinner; by these prin-

ciples he will judge us, and by these will the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. The human conscience must answer, This is *right!* Such a judgment gives us a sense of *rest.* With *such* a judgment to come, the presumption is that the Providence which leads up to it is as equitable and as sublime as itself. Witness, too, that as God is to judge us, he also himself appeals to our judgment! He asks us to consider his ways, and challenges us to tell what iniquity we have found in him. Hence in many parts of the Bible, notably in the Psalms, we have judgments pronounced by man upon the Lord, as if the Lord had placed himself at our bar and asked us to acquit or condemn his providence. He proceeds upon reasons. His principles are ascertainable, and such as can be judged. Wonderful is this, that God should allow us to judge his way! He does not silence the Psalmist, nor does he reprove the acclaiming angels; he will be judged by all who are honest in soul. And beautiful, too, is this, that notwithstanding the severity and awfulness of his judgments, the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works! J. P.

Men needed to have it made visible—writ large in indelible and decipherable characters, even on the earth's surface—that there is a moral Governor Who takes cognizance of evil, to Whose ear the cry for vengeance goes up when deeds are done that outrage humanity, and within Whose hand lies every agency which can either make or blast the fortunes of a commonwealth. Other branches of the human family were hurrying along the same path. It was mercy to erect, right in the centre of the populous lands, on the very road by which men passed from north to south and east to west, a monument of Heaven's justice. It was specially merciful to the other Canaanitish tribes to have such a spectacle laid at their own door. *Dykes.*

The doom of Sodom was not to be regarded as an isolated judgment; but the scene of desolation, which was forever to occupy the site of the cities of the plain, would also forever exhibit to Israel the consequences of sin, and be to them a type of future judgment. It is in this light that the Scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament present to us the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. A. E.—— In some twenty passages scattered over Scripture from the Pentateuch to the Apocalypse, this is referred to by name as the most conspicuous instance of divine vengeance upon sin. Sodom is employed as a type of Babylon's fall by two of the greatest prophets. It is conjoined with Tyre and Sidon in the solemn warnings of our Lord Himself. And in the Revelation it stands side by side with Egypt as a type of exceptional impiety. *Dykes.*

The case became for all future time a standard illustration of God's most sudden, fearful and utter destruction of the wicked. (See Deut. 29 : 23 and Isa. 13 : 19 and Jer. 20 : 16 and 50 : 40 and Amos 4 : 11 and 2 Pet. 2 : 6 and Jude 7.) It classes itself naturally with the deluge of Noah's time and with the fall of Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea, and the swallowing up of Korah and his company in the wilderness—all combining to show that God never lacks the means or the power to begin his threatened retribution upon the wicked here in time whenever he deems it wise for the moral ends of warning. In view of this appalling scene, how terribly significant become the words of Jude—"Set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire!" How easily and yet how fearfully can the Almighty execute the judgments written against guilty sinners who scorn his words of warning and dare his vengeance! H. C.

Even if the positive and irrefragable proofs of the truths of religion could be subverted, an unquenchable instinct of the soul remains to retain hold of the notion of a moral system, and of law and justice. This sense of the fitness of RETRIBUTION flashes upon us in some form every hour. We cannot read a page of history, we cannot listen to the news of the day, we cannot walk the streets, without forcibly admitting the idea that there must be a vindication of right. If at any time the films of false philosophy have deceived us into the opinion that vice and virtue are one and the same—this sophistry is instantly and irrecoverably scattered by our first brunt with some real affair of common life that appeals to the ordinary sentiments of humanity: —the illusion fades—truth and nature stand out and speak aloud, and we dare not refuse to hear them. But if there is to be retribution *at all*, if *any* crime or cruelty, the most atrocious which history records or which history has forgotten, is to be brought to account in an after-life, and is to receive its due award of chastisement;—if the authority of God, as Governor of men, is to be in any manner asserted and maintained, then is it possible to believe that such retribution shall be otherwise than ABSOLUTELY IMPARTIAL? and when we say *impartial*, we must mean that it shall be in the strictest sense UNIVERSAL. It must bear alike, and equally, upon every responsible agent, and must come close home to the entire merit and demerit of each.

There is in fact no justice that is not universal justice. Justice altogether is nullified and disgraced by even a single and the smallest instance of oblivion, or inequality, or perversion of facts. I. T.

*The Dead Sea.*

The *Dead Sea*, to use its modern and more familiar name, is usually called in the Bible the "Salt Sea," but is also styled the "Sea of the Plain," or the *Arabah;* the "East Sea." To the writers of the Talmud it was known as the "Sea of Sodom" and the "Sea of Salt;" to Josephus as the "Asphaltic" and "Sodomitic" Lake; and it is now called by the Bedouin "Bahr Lut," the Sea of Lot. The title "Dead Sea" probably originated in the very general belief, that the waters of the lake covered the doomed Cities of the Plain, and were of such a deadly character that no bird could fly over them; and that the shores were desolate and barren. Recent investigation has completely disposed of these erroneous impressions.

The Dead Sea occupies the deepest portion of the great depression of the Jordan valley; it is oblong in form, the longest dimension being almost due north and south; and its width is nearly uniform, except near the southern end, where a long low peninsula, the Lisan, stretches out for some distance from the eastern shore, and divides its waters into two unequal portions. The lake has a length of forty-six miles, and an average width of ten miles; on either side the mountain-ranges run parallel to each other, and on the east they rise abruptly from the water's edge, leaving no margin, except at those points where small deltas have been formed at the mouths of the larger ravines that discharge their waters into the lake. The northern end, bordered by the plain of Jericho, is somewhat rounded, and at the southern end the shore is for some two or three miles perfectly flat and but slightly raised above the surface of the water; beyond this it is shut in by the salt mountain of Jebel Usdum and the rising ground that separates the waters of the lake from those of the Red Sea. The extraordinary depression of the surface of the lake, 1292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, together with the absence of any outlet for its waters, render it the most remarkable body of water in the world; and its great depth, 1308 feet at the deepest point, is equally worthy of notice. The total depression of the bed of the lake is thus 2600 feet, almost the same as the elevation of the Mount of Olives above the Mediterranean. The water of the Dead Sea is clear and bright, but, owing to the large quantities of various salts held in solution, it is intensely salt, and has a nauseous, bitter taste. The specific gravity, 1228, distilled water being 1000, and the Mediterranean 1025, is greater than that of any known water, and to this may be attributed the extreme buoyancy noticed by so many travellers. When the surrounding mountains are lighted up by the bright rays of the sun, there is, perhaps, no place in the world that can equal this region for brilliancy and richness of coloring; and the vivid tints in Mr. Holman Hunt's picture of the "Scapegoat" are no exaggeration of those frequently witnessed on the shores of the Dead Sea. No one who has stood on the Mount of Olives and seen the mountains of Moab glowing under the rays of the setting sun, can ever forget the wondrous beauty of the scene, with the bright blue water lying in the depths below, and the burnished mountains rising beyond like the border of some enchanted fairyland. Striking atmospheric effects are occasionally produced by the enormous evaporation Irby and Mangles noticed it "rising in broad, transparent columns of vapor, not unlike water-spouts in appearance, but very much longer." The geology of the basin of the Dead Sea was carefully examined by M. Louis Lartet, the distinguished geologist who accompanied the expedition of the Duc de Luynes, and the conclusion he arrived at was that the lake "had never been in communication with the neighboring oceans, although its waters formerly stood at a much higher level than they now do." The fact that a hill of cretaceous formation, 781 feet above the sea, separates the waters of the Dead Sea from those of the Gulf of Akabah, and that the cretaceous strata are covered with their own *débris* alone, and show no trace of any water-course running in a southerly direction, effectually disproves the theory of an ancient prolongation of the Jordan to the Red Sea; and that of an ancient marine communication with the surrounding oceans is equally disproved by "the absence of any marine organizations in the most ancient strata of the basin, the fluviatile character of the post-eocene deposits of the Arabah, the existing traces of the direction of the streams toward the Dead Sea, and the non-existence of any material elevation of the ground in the middle of the Arabah since the formation of the present valleys." M. Lartet thinks that the position of the cretaceous and eocene beds on both sides of the Jordan valley, and the striking rectilineal character of the valley itself, seems "to favor the idea of the existence of a vast line of fracture through the middle of the country;" and

that "the eastern side of the highlands of Judah must have undergone a considerable downward movement all along the line of dislocation, and thus originated the depressed trench which separates Palestine proper from the highlands on the other side of Jordan." The basin of the Dead Sea has thus been formed without any influence from, or communication with, the ocean; whence it follows that the lake which occupies the bottom of the basin has never been anything but a reservoir for the rainfall, the saltness of which originally proceeded from the constitution of the environs of the lake, and has greatly increased under the influence of incessant evaporation. M. Lartet found the ancient deposits of the Dead Sea extending up the Jordan valley as far north as Wady Zerka, where they were at least 300 feet above the present surface of the lake, so that the water must at one time have stood at that level, filling up a large portion of the valley, and have then deposited the marls which are so rich in salt and gypsum beds. At a later date volcanic eruptions have taken place to the north-east and east of the Dead Sea, and the last phenomena which affected its basin were the hot and mineral springs and bituminous eruptions which often accompany and follow volcanic action. *Maj. Wilson.*

[For map, etc., see New Testament, vol. 1, p. 657.]

There is no evidence, but the contrary, that there has been any change in the general form and appearance of the Lake since the creation of man. It has no outlet whatever, being, in fact, the deepest depression known on the surface of the earth. It receives at its northern end the constant flow of the River Jordan, on its eastern side the *Callirhoe* and the *Arnon*, now the Zerka Main and the Mojib, besides some smaller streams. At its south end, the Fikreh, Jeib, Kuseib, Ghurundel, and other streams draining the Arabah, empty themselves into it; and on the west, the little stream of Engedi and several others add to its waters. Yet this enormous inflow is fully counterbalanced by the continual evaporation from its surface. There are also many springs on its shores and within its shallower waters, some hot, some salt, some sulphurous, and others fresh, which contribute to its bulk. Though no life, animal or vegetable, can possibly continue in the Lake, there is—wherever, as on the whole south-east shore and in various spots on the west side, fresh water flows into the Lake—a positive exuberance of life to the water's edge. This is especially the case in the "Safieh," the southern plains of *Moab* at the south-east, and at *Engedi* on the opposite shore. From the earliest times to the present these spots have been carefully cultivated. Engedi was contemporary with the Cities of the Plain. When we see the surprising fertility and delicious climate of these buried nooks, we can well understand the attractiveness of these cities and their lands to Lot.

*Of the Site of the Four Cities,*

*Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, destroyed by fire and brimstone from the Lord, it is scarcely necessary to say that no trace remains. Scripture does not state that they were engulfed in the Sea, but that they were destroyed, and "the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein" (Deut. 29 : 23). A description which would equally apply to the desolate plain at the south end and to the barren, sulphur-spread tract between Jericho and the north end. It has been questioned at which end these, almost the oldest cities in the records of human history, stood. Tradition places them at the south. There is, however, reason for supposing them to have been at the *north* end. When they are first mentioned (Gen. 10 : 19) they are spoken of as cities of the Canaanites on their border. They are next named in Gen. 13, in the account of the separation of Abraham and Lot. Abraham and Lot stood together between Bethel and Hai, when "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar" (Gen. 13 : 10). From the hills where they stood, it is impossible to gain a glimpse of the south end of the Dead Sea, while the plain of Jericho is spread almost at the beholder's feet. Again, after the destruction of the cities we are told that Abraham, then encamped at Mamre, "looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. 19 : 28). The accuracy of the expression is to be noted. Not he *saw*, but *he looked toward* the Cities of the Plain. From the hill above Mamre the plain itself cannot be seen, but the depression between the nearer hills and the distant tops of Gilead is plainly to be perceived, which is not the case with the depression of the southern end of the Dead Sea. Thus Abraham could at once have identified the locality whence the smoke arose. Once more, in the view which was granted to

Moses from the top of Pisgah, he beheld "the south and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar." Now from the summit of Nebo it is utterly impossible to behold the south-east of the Dead Sea, the situation of the modern Dra'a, which is said, by a tradition not earlier than the times of Josephus and Jerome to be *Zoar;* but if we place Zoar in the parallel of Engedi, on the *east* side of the Dead Sea—we see the limit of Moses' view, in accordance with the Sacred Record. From the top of Nebo, the view of the plain of the Jordan runs on uninterruptedly till it is cut off by the headland of Ras Feshkhah, the Arabic equivalent of Pisgah, and exactly in front of it, Ziara, projecting in front of Nebo. I believe the exact site of Zoar is to be found just below Nebo, in a line between it and Ras Feshkhah, and on a knoll slightly rising above the plain of Shittim. H. B. T.

As it is hardly possible for any one to read the account in Gen. 13 : 10 without feeling that Abraham and Lot were actually looking down on Sodom and Gomorrah when "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah," it follows that those cities must have been situated on some part of the plain *north* of the Dead Sea, and visible from the heights east of Bethel. In support of this view we may draw attention to the mention, in verse 10, of "the plain of Jordan," which could not have extended below the point at which the river entered the Dead Sea, and the direct testimony, in verse 11, that Lot journeyed east, a course which would have led him far away from the southern end of the Dead Sea. *Wilson.*

On the rebellion of the Cities of the Plain, we are told (Gen. 14) that the Assyrians smote the Horites in Mount Seir unto El Paran, and returned and smote the country of the Amalekites and also the Amorites that dwelt in Hazezon-Tamar or Engedi. After this the King of Sodom and his confederates met the invaders in the *Vale of Siddim*, and, on their defeat, Abraham pursued the victors on their march home by Damascus, and overtook them in Laish, or Dan, under Mount Hermon. Had Sodom and the other cities been situated at the south end of the Sea, it was certainly not *after* smiting the Amalekites and the Amorites at Engedi that they would have met the invader, but long before he reached Hazezon-Tamar. But if Sodom and the confederate cities were in the plain of Jordan, there is a topographical sequence in the whole story : while Abraham and his allies hurriedly pursue the plunderers up the Ghor, or Jordan Valley, without delay, till they overtake them at the source of the Jordan. [As a final point] there is a wide plain, a dead level, extending some eight or ten miles south of the lake, called by the Arabs "El Ghor," which is conjectured to have been the site of the Cities of the Plain. But this plain is covered by a layer of sand, gypsum, and salt, and yields no evidence of having ever been cultivated in historical times. H. B. T.

The region at the southern end of the Dead Sea is a salt marsh and desert, with only a narrow belt of inhabitable land skirting its eastern border at the foot of the mountains. On the other hand, at the north end of the Dead Sea, there is a large and fertile plain which has been occupied by flourishing cities ever since the days of Moses and Joshua, at least. In speaking of the tell-system of the Jordan valley, I have shown that the ancient inhabitants built their cities upon natural or artificial mounds, and not down upon the flat land of the plain itself ; and I have shown that such tells, covered with ruins, exist at the north end of the Dead Sea, while there are none at the southern end. As we can identify some of these tells with places which existed in Josephus's time, and still further back with cities which existed in the time of Joshua, it is not unreasonable to suppose that these same tells were occupied by cities in the time of Lot and Chedorlaomer. With regard to the account of the view of the Jordan valley which Lot had, or of that which Moses had, in both of which Zoar is mentioned, any justifiable rules of interpretation compel us to look for the site of Zoar at the north end of the Dead Sea. Only five sites are required ; namely, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim and Zoar. And on the plain of Shittim we have exactly five sites. *Merrill.*

[For the traditional view, that the cities stood at the *south* end of the Lake, see Wolcott, Bib. Sac., vol. 25.]

*Agencies employed in Destruction.* There is a very general belief that the cities were submerged, and that they now lie beneath the waters of the Dead Sea, but there is absolutely no ground for this supposition. Recent research has shown that in historic times there has been no great change in the Jordan valley, and that the waters of the Dead Sea formerly covered a much larger area than they do at present ; and though the exact nature of the catastrophe which overwhelmed the cities will perhaps never be known, we are expressly told in the Bible that their destruction was effected not by water,

but by fire and brimstone rained on them from heaven (Gen. 19 : 24 ; Deut. 29 : 23 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 6 ; Jude 7). *Wilson.*

There is no mention of any earthquake, which, if it occurred, must in the judgment of the narrator have been altogether a subordinate feature. Nor is an earthquake necessarily implied in the expression "overthrown," used in Deut. 29. Still, more or less tremor of the ground very probably occurred, and might have impressed itself on traditions of the event, especially as the district is subject to earthquakes, though it is not mentioned in theological narrative. The description is that of a bitumen or petroleum eruption, similar to those which on a small scale have been so destructive in the regions of Canada and the United States of America. They arise from the existence of reservoirs of compressed inflammable gas along with petroleum and water, existing at considerable depths below the surface. In the valley of the Euphrates, according to Layard, the Arabs can produce miniature eruptions of this kind, by breaking with stones the crust of hardened asphalt that has formed on the surface of the bitumen springs, and igniting the vapors and liquid petroleum. Now the valley of the Dead Sea is an "oil district," and from the incidental mention of its slime pits, or literally asphalt pits, in Genesis 14, was apparently more productive in mineral pitch in ancient times. It is known that petroleum exudes from the rocks both on the sides and in the bottom of the Dead Sea, and, being hardened by evaporation and oxygelation, forms the asphaltum referred to by so many travellers. The source of the bituminous matter is in the great beds of bituminous limestone of Upper Cretaceous age which appear at Neby Mousa, on the Jericho road and at many other places in the vicinity of the sea, and no doubt underlie its bed and the lower part of the Jordan plain. From these beds bituminous and gaseous matter must have been at all times exuding. Further, the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea basis are on the line of a great fault or fracture traversing these beds, and affording means of escape to their products, especially when the district is shaken by earthquakes. We have thus only to suppose that at the time in question reservoirs of condensed gas and petroleum existed under the plain of Siddim, and that these were suddenly discharged, either by their own accumulated pressure, or by an earthquake shock fracturing the overlying beds, when the phenomena described by the writer in Genesis would occur, and after the eruption the site would be covered with a saline and sulphurous deposit, while many of the sources of petroleum previously existing might be permanently dried up. In connection with this there might be subsidence of the ground over the now exhausted reservoirs, and this might give rise to the idea of the submergence of the cities. It is to be observed, however, that the parenthetic statement in Genesis 14, "which is the Salt Sea," does not certainly mean under the sea, and that it relates not to the cities themselves but to the plain where the battle recorded in the chapter was fought at a time previous to the eruption. . . . Sodom and its companion cities were no doubt so situated as to be specially subject to one particular kind of overthrow. But it may be safely said that there is no city in the world which is not equally, though perhaps by other agencies, within the reach of Divine power exercised through the energies of nature, should it be found to be destitute of "ten righteous men." So that the conclusion still holds — "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." *Dawson.*

## Section 47.

### BIRTH OF MOAB AND AMMON.

GENESIS 19 : 29–38.

29 AND it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, that God remembered
Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the
which Lot dwelt.
30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him ;
31 for he feared to dwell in Zoar : and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. And the
firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come
32 in unto us after the manner of all the earth : come, let us make our father drink wine, and we

33 will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father
drink wine that night : and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father ; and he knew not
34 when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the first-
born said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father · let us make him drink
wine this night also ; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our
35 father. And they made their father drink wine that night also · and the younger arose, and
36 lay with him ; and he knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the
37 daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his
38 name Moab · the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she
also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi · the same is the father of the children of
Ammon unto this day.

Lot escaped the dreadful crisis of judgment with the loss of all his wealth. Abraham's tent is still surrounded with comfort and plenty. Lot barely escaped destruction "so as by fire," with the stain of the wickedness of Sodom upon the remnant of his household, to become the dishonored father of a dishonored race. Abraham, the friend of God, receives at the age of a hundred years the fulfilment of the promise that he shall be the father of a chosen people, and of the Messiah in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Such is the contrast between the faithful pilgrim who held fast by faith to the promise of a better country, and the unfaithful pilgrim who eagerly turned away in his progress after the things of the world, and ceased to set his affections on things above. And such is the moral of the inspired drama. Lot passes away from the scenes of the history, and his descendants are heard of thereafter only as the enemies of Jehovah and his covenant people ; while Abraham proceeds onward through new scenes of trial and of triumph to fill the entire field of the history of redemption. And it soon appeared that the account of the dread judgment upon the cities of the plain is but an incidental episode in the history of Abraham. S. R.

**29, 30.** Lot does not long remain in Zoar. The judgment executed upon Sodom had filled his soul with such awe that he now sought refuge in the wilderness. A cave in the mountains of what afterward became the land of Moab served him for a dwelling-place. K. ——It was wrong at first not to betake himself to the mountain : it was wrong, afterward, to go to it when God had given him the assurance that *Zoar* should be spared for his sake. Both cases argue a strange want of faith in the truth and providence of God. Had he still dwelt at Zoar the shameful transaction afterward recorded had, in all probability, not taken place. A. C.

**32.** When God delivers us from destruction he doth not secure us from all afflictions : Lot hath lost his wife, his allies, his substance, and now betakes himself to an uncomfortable solitariness. Yet though he fled from company he could not fly from sin : he who could not be tainted with uncleanness in Sodom is overtaken with drunkenness and incest in a cave : rather than Satan shall not want baits his own daughters will prove Sodomites : those which should comfort, betrayed him. How little are some hearts moved with judgments ! The ashes of Sodom and the pillar of salt were not yet out of their eye, when they dare think of lying with their own father. They knew that while Lot was sober he could not be unchaste. Drunkenness is the way to all bestial affections and acts : wine knows no difference either of persons or sins. *Bp. H.*

**36.** The sacred writer, in furnishing us with particular relations contained in this book, always kept in mind the promise of the Messiah, and was desirous of showing that the expectation of this great object of the Jewish hopes was predominant in all times, and influenced the opinions and manners of every generation. The recollection of this will furnish the reason of many particulars mentioned in the book, which might otherwise appear extraordinary and exceptionable. It will, perhaps, serve to explain the conduct of Lot's daughters ; the violent desire of Sarah for a son ; the solicitude of Isaac to remove the barrenness of Rebekah ; and the contention between the wives of Jacob. In conformity with this design also, Moses relates the jealousies between Ishmael and Isaac ; and between Esau and Jacob ; and many other minute and singular particulars, which an historian of his dignity would not have condescended to describe, but with a view to illustrate the general persuasion of and gradual preparation for the coming of the Messiah. *Gray.*

**37. His name Moab.** This name is generally interpreted *of the father.*——**38. Ben-ammi,** *the son of my people.* Both names justify the view that it was merely to *preserve the family* that the daughters of Lot made use of

the above expedient. The generation which proceeded from this incestuous connection was certainly a *bad* one. The *Moabites* soon fell from the faith of God, and became *idolaters*, the people of *Chemosh*, and of *Baal-peor* (Num. 21 : 29 ; 25 : 1-3), and were enemies to the children of Abraham. And the *Ammonites*, who dwelt near to the Moabites, united with them in *idolatry*, and were also enemies to Israel. As both peoples made afterward a considerable figure in the Sacred History, the impartial inspired writer takes care to introduce an account of their *origin*. A. C.——These national stocks, thus morally tainted in their origin, were also morally perverse in their subsequent history. From a regard to their propinquity to them in blood and race, the children of Israel were obliged to spare them, and were not permitted either to conquer them or to force a passage through their country. They were never, however, incorporated with the people of God. They inhabited the mountains to the east of the Dead Sea,—the Ammonites further to the north than Moab,—and, consequently, were in an after age conterminous neighbors to the Israelites in the land of Canaan. It must not be forgotten that Ruth, who has a place in the genealogy of the Saviour, was a Moabitess. C. G. B.

For his drunkenness on two successive evenings, at least, Lot was responsible, if not for the incest to which it led. And the fact gives a painful insight into his moral state, even after experience which might have sobered any man. The conduct of his children out of Sodom is of a piece with what we know of their upbringing in Sodom. It is fair, indeed, to remember, that in that age, as the case of Abraham himself shows, the law of incest was not yet firmly defined ; and the exceptional circumstances of their situation must count for something. Still, the circumstance that they despaired of winning their father's consent when he was sober, is enough to show that they themselves felt their purpose to be, in spite of all excuses, an extremely doubtful one. Israel's descent from the child of sacred promise and of obedient faith is made the more bright by contrast with the dismal origin of Israel's kindred, the sons of Moab and of Ben-Ammi. *Dykes.*

And then we hear of him no more. He is left by the sacred narrative, saved indeed from the conflagration of Sodom, but an outcast, widowed, homeless, hopeless, without children or grandchildren, save the authors and the heirs of his shame. E. H. B.——It would seem as though this case were specially recorded as a caution against that uncharitableness of spirit that sometimes we find limiting our intercession for all the children of God. As we look at such and such an one that professes Jehovah—so worldly, so narrow, so selfish, so weak-headed as to be blown about by every popular breeze ; so weak-hearted that our charity can hardly inclose him within the pale of the covenant at all—then we are to remember Abraham's heroic intercession and this interposition of the Divine mercy, showing that, after all, Lot is one of Jehovah's people, therefore shall he not perish with the wicked. This biography of Lot, brief and fragmentary as it is, is well worthy of our study, not only because it is a biography which the Spirit of God has thought it worth while to record for our instruction, but because of its intense significance as a warning to worldly-minded Christians. S. R.

*Lot's disregard of spiritual privileges brought upon him a bitter entail of sin and shame.* There can be little doubt that Lot's own religious character suffered from the long sojourn in Sodom. A man cannot voluntarily expose himself to the worst of influences, from the mere love of gain, without his religious sensibilities being deadened ; and this only can account for the grievous termination to the history of Lot, which is among the most melancholy records in the Word of God. It is one of those cases which we must contemplate because it is there, —very terrible, and very necessary to be thought of ; but we would wish to look at it as Abraham did at the ruin of Sodom, standing in the place where we have met God, and looking at it "a great way off." There is a general consistency in the lives of men ; and such a deplorable spiritual catastrophe could not well have happened to one who strove to maintain warm religious feeling, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. To Lot's family the disregard of all religious associations was even worse. His wife caught the infection of the place, and became in love, deep and unholy, with its fashions. It may have been her influence which prevented Lot from leaving sooner, and, with all the urgency of doom behind, he could not carry her with him. The family of Lot mingled with the men of Sodom, and learned their ways. When the poor father, alarmed for his children's safety, implored his sons-in-law—"Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city," "he seemed as one that mocked." We can perceive, in this closing scene, how much Lot must have had to bear from those who were most nearly related to him. We know what sins followed the fall of Sodom, and what a salvation Lot still needed from the fearful pit

and from the miry clay into which he was led. Of the remainder of his life we know nothing. *Ker.*——The edge of the moral which his example points lies in this, that to the last he continued to be a servant of Jehovah. He was not seduced by evil surroundings either into idolatry or into profligacy. The filthy deeds of his neighbors "vexed his righteous soul." He must even have exasperated them by occasional, perhaps by habitual, remonstrances ; else they could scarcely have cast it up to him at the last, that having come in as a foreigner, he had set himself up to be their judge. In spite of his faults, an apostle could still call him a "just" man ; the "godly" one whom the Lord "knew how to deliver." His very deliverance from a ruin so sweeping proved the exceptional pureness of his life. It is precisely this which makes his case so instructive. What warning can be more appalling against every unhallowed association which pious people can contract with ungodly comrades? What example could better illustrate the dangers which beset the path of those who "*will* be rich"? Literally, he was "saved as by fire ;" "a firebrand plucked out of the burning" (Amos 4 : 11). *Dykes.*

*Revolting Records of the Old Testament.*

Old Testament history was written both to offer examples for imitation, and *warnings* against conduct to be avoided ; thus affording lessons in the plan and method of God's moral discipline of man, "profitable' —not only as models —but even more "for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

*Some reasons for the perpetuation, in the Book of God, for all time, and in all languages, and for all races of men, of the revolting records contained in Old Testament history.*

1. *To show the frightful capabilities of the human soul in the direction of moral evil.* The biblical record as it stands, alone of all writings, presents without gloss, concealment or exaggeration, the complete and eternal truth concerning moral character. There is a popular idea about the patriarchs and the noted men of Old Testament history, which has no ground in the Bible itself, viz., that they were very holy men, patterns of all excellence ; as examples, only second to the one great example of Christ himself. This idea is incorrect and harmful. Some of them the Bible does not represent as examples of any virtue at all. This is true of nearly all the twelve patriarchs. *Men* have canonized them : the Bible does not. But *why* should the divine record preserve and perpetuate these facts? Just for this reason, viz., that men everywhere and to the end of time may learn the gangrenous power of evil, and not shrink from the surgery of the Almighty but most merciful Father, when used for its removal from the soul, or from the human race. Let us suppose that all such records had been omitted from the biblical history. Men would say of the record, "These are unnatural characters. Human character now is formed under different conditions. Those men were without many of the temptations to which we are subject." Men sometimes sink in discouragement when they hold before them the absolutely perfect example of Jesus only. They aspire toward that exaltation of character, but it is high and far away, till they read the record of the imperfect men who, notwithstanding, *were* saints of God in the ancient time.

Or suppose it were left for the human imagination to portray the moral character of men, and the moral conflicts of human life. Even *with* the light which the Bible sheds on the problem of moral evil, uninspired men have, with very few exceptions, drawn only caricatures of men, either for good or evil ; and where the portrayal of moral character has verisimilitude, as in the writings of Shakespeare, the truthful sketching has resulted from the infiltration into literature of biblical ideas. Otherwise the patterns both of virtue and of vice are unnatural and false. Take uninspired historians. With very few exceptions the total moral impression of the characters and acts delineated is warped to actual falsity. What colossal prejudices ; what distorted models ; what bitter partisanship ; what vivid cursing of the bad ; what blind laudation of the good ; what partial reading of motives is displayed on the historic page. But biblical history is written on a wholly different plan. Here character appears as it is. Balaam is painted no worse than he was. David is exhibited no better than he was. The low faults and follies of Samson are neither concealed nor extenuated. We are not told that while the races of Canaan were vile heathen, the children of Israel were very excellent people. Facts are told, and *truth* concerning *character* is the impression made. No reader can fail to see that races of men, that individual men, have appointed to them in this world a moral conflict with a gigantic presence and power of evil, which in its myriad forms is well-nigh omnipresent, and that victory is purchased only at the price of sleepless vigilance, of resisting unto blood, of enduring hardness as good soldiers, and that till life shall end. It is one of the fundamental conditions of any true moral

uplifting of the human race, be it by human or by divine power, that men should know—what they dislike to know and what they very much desire to forget—that all sin, every form of evil, has a terrible power of reproduction and expansion. This is the first great, omnipresent fact that confronts us, in all *thorough* study of human experience or of human history. The permanent and repulsive bottom truth of moral character as experienced in human life, as seen in human history, demands the records of the Old Testament history, *as they stand.*

2. *To show that the development of moral beings, or of a race of moral beings, in good is a long process, even for Omnipotence and infinite Love.*

Infinite Power cannot shorten the process through which men must sweat and watch and fight for those moral ends which are the highest, for that life which is nearest the Son of God. *Moral character* is not a product resulting from the factors of infinite Power and finite being, but a product resulting from the factors of divine *influence, instruction* and *discipline* on the one hand, and the free play and exercise of finite mind and will, struggling,—almost blindly at the first,—toward light and liberty, on the other. The process is long ; the progress slow ; the halts are many ; the wanderings are frequent ; seeming and perhaps real retrogression are not wanting ; but the goal *is reached.* "The mills of the gods grind slowly," and forever, but they *do grind their grist of moral grain ;* and the value and eternal duration of the product infinitely overbalance all the expenditure of time and precious resources in the long process.

3. The revolting narratives of Old Testament history *give a most impressive lesson in the divine patience.* The lesson in patience is one of the latest learned, also one of the most essential to perfect character. Old Testament history shows not only how wonderfully patient God has ever been with men in their moral training, but also, speaking after a human fashion yet without irreverence, that human sin has been a hard trial even for the infinite divine patience. The man whom God created in his own image, for freedom, holiness and light, enslaved himself to sin and turned away into darkness, at the very dawn of his life on the earth. The sin and wickedness of men grew and spread, in intensity and in the scope of its dominion, even faster than the rapid multiplication of mankind on the earth. Yet God bore with the men of the antediluvian world for a period equal to that from the days when the old Roman empire was in its glory to this day. Even after the announcement of the decision to destroy the guilty human race—and who can measure the degree of revulsion from the sin of men felt by infinite holiness?—the Lord waits a hundred and twenty years before bringing over the inhabited world the destroying flood ! And when we follow the record of Old Testament history down through its earlier and its later stages, we ask, but we cannot answer, the question, How *could* infinite knowledge and holiness *so bear* with persistence in rebellion and in guilt ?

We recoil from many things in the records of the Jewish people. What should we say, what should we feel and think, if the actual life, the unwritten history of races and tribes of men, much more morally corrupt than the Jews, were spread out before our own eyes as they ever are before the eye of the Omniscient ? And yet for four thousand years the divine compassion waited, before sending the Saviour to become one of the human race, that He might redeem and save men. Is this indifference ? Is it mystery ? No ! it is patience. And through all these thousands of years the divine patience has kept even pace with the divine love and wisdom, in working out the moral elevation of men. And now, in these latest generations, with all races of men so closely related and connected together as modern science and art have caused them to be—rather as God's blessed purposes of mercy have caused them to be—is it enthusiasm, is it not rather a sober tracing of the indications which the Almighty finger points out, when we *expect* the near future to reveal to our eyes a much more rapid realization of what divine Love has been so long patiently working out for the salvation of men ? The restored human character is to be moulded on that of God. And what one attribute of God is offered for human imitation more than his patience ? The Apostle James fitly sets it as the very crown of character. "Perfect in patience is altogether perfect." And certainly patience coupled with knowledge ; patience which has its root in love and charity ; patience which grows strong with exercise, both to bear and to do ; patience which makes the soul more truly humble the longer it lives, and more intensely active also ; patience which steadily but surely eliminates out of the character and the life all low aims and loves—all self-seeking, and leads other men to God while aspiring toward him,—this flower and mellow fruit of character *is* like the character of God. The *element* of the divine patience woven into the moral growth and upward progress of mankind is one of the most potential elements. And there is no record accessible to us which reveals in such clear light

the patience of God as the record of Old Testament history : and it is just the most revolting portions of this historic record which most impressively show and illustrate God's patience in working out the slow process of man's moral elevation.

There are doubtless other reasons, easy to be discovered, for the perpetuation in the Book of God, of records revolting to a refined sense, and the occasion of stumbling to some : and there may be reasons in the divine mind, which we, who see all things that concern moral government and discipline "as through a glass darkly," and as yet know but "in part," still fail to discover. But are not the reasons we have presented amply sufficient for a justification of the ways of God? Are they not sufficient to secure that respectful and well-timed attention to these sad records, that the records themselves, taken with their *setting* in the history of which they form a part, justly challenge?

It is not necessary that every portion of the Bible should be treated as "devotional reading" by men in every age ; indeed we should be far from commending the wisdom of those among us who read, "in course," the entire Old Testament history, around their home firesides. There is a place for *all* these historical portions of the Bible, but *that* is not the place. But a man who is familiar with the social and moral condition of certain races of men to day, might profitably turn to portions of Old Testament history which would furnish poor moral nutriment to "babes" within the circle of refined Christian homes in our own land, but which, read and explained "with great plainness of speech" to some full-grown Africans, might be as "sincere milk" as those men are yet able to digest ; quite on the level of their intelligence, sadly suited to the low plane of their experience. *Herrick.*

## Section 48.

### ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH. GERAR, BEERSHEBA.

GENESIS 20 : 1–18.

1 AND Abraham journeyed from thence toward the land of the South, and dwelt between
2 Kadesh and Shur ; and he sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is
3 my sister : and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, because of the
4 woman which thou hast taken ; for she is a man's wife. Now Abimelech had not come near
5 her : and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay even a righteous nation? Said he not himself unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother : in the integrity of
6 my heart and the innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in the dream, Yea, I know that in the integrity of thy heart thou hast done this, and I also withheld
7 thee from sinning against me : therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man's wife ; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live : and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.
8 And Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things
9 in their ears : and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and wherein have I sinned against thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not
10 to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this
11 thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place ; and
12 they will slay me for my wife's sake. And moreover she is indeed my sister, the daughter of
13 my father, but not the daughter of my mother ; and she became my wife : and it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me ; at every place whither we shall come, say of me,
14 He is my brother. And Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and menservants and womenser-
15 vants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said,

16 Behold, my land is before thee : dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver : behold, it is for thee a covering of
17 the eyes to all that are with thee ; and in respect of all thou art righted. And Abraham prayed unto God : and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants ; and they
18 bare children. For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Nothing is more worthy of admiration than the fidelity of the Scripture history. There is not a saint, however eminent, but his faults are reported as faithfully as his virtues ; and from the testimony given we are constrained to acknowledge that the best of men, when they come into temptation, are weak and fallible as others if they be not succored from above. *Bush.*——The falsehood of Abraham, the guilt and violence of David, were very different in their effect on character in an age when truth and purity and gentleness were scarcely recognized, from what they would be now. Then Abraham and David had not so sinned against their consciences as a man would sin now in doing the same acts, because their consciences were less enlightened. F. W. R.——I am called on not to walk in all the footsteps of father Abraham, but only in the footsteps of his faith. In this chapter he evinces a want of faith when, instead of trusting to God for his safety, he trusted to a device of his own. The God who delivered him in spite of this his perversity would surely have delivered him had he committed himself in all fearlessness and truth to His holy keeping. In the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, more especially in that of Jacob, we observe the intromission of human deceit with the proceedings and purposes of the divine administration. Nevertheless the counsel of the Lord shall stand, unaffected alike by the opposition of enemies and the waywardness or misconduct of friends. T. C.

If we suppose that the Divine commendation of certain Old Testament personages indicates the Divine approval of the particular conduct of those personages, our moral standards are hopelessly confused. If, on the other hand, we recognize the truth, that God judges men by their inner spirit toward himself even though they may be at fault in their mode of exhibiting that spirit, we are at no loss to see how a man's spirit may be approved of God, while his conduct in many things is rightly disapproved of men. Abraham shows his faith in God by leaving his land and his people at the call of God ; and he proves his fidelity toward God by never swerving from the worship of Jehovah, even while surrounded by idolaters. In view of this proof of his faith, Abraham is commended of God as one of his children at heart, notwithstanding his polygamy and his untruthfulness —in accordance with the practice of his day. Esau despises spiritual privileges in contrast with indulgence of his appetite. Jacob gives the first place to blessings in the line of God's promises. God commends Jacob in and for this choice ; but he does not thereby show his approval of Jacob's deceit and falsehood in his outreaching to secure the promised blessings. So all the way through the inspired record. S. S. T.

**1. Sojourned in Gerar.** No reason is assigned by the sacred historian for so sudden a removal. What is certain is, that he did soon after the overthrow of Sodom break up the settlement near Hebron which for fifteen years had been his home. He moved farther to the south west and nearer to the desert. After halting at various points in the "Negeb" or South-land of Canaan, he finally attempted a more permanent encampment close to the headquarters of a stranger tribe. Gerar was the capital of a Philistine people allied to the Egyptians, whose five subdivisions at a later period occupied the Shephelah, or strip of level land along the southern coasts, whence they waged with Israel an incessant border warfare. To that coast-strip they lent their own name of Philistia or Palestine, which in much later times came to be inaccurately extended to the whole land. *Dykes.*

Gerar was not far from Gaza and Beersheba. Its site has probably been identified by Rowlands with the traces of an ancient city now called *Khirbet-el-Gerar*, near a deep Wady called *Jurf-el-Gerar*, about three hours to the south-south-east of Gaza. E. H. B.——Here he and his descendants dwelt for a long time at BEERSHEBA, at the south-western extremity of the maritime plain, upon the borders of the desert. This was Abraham's *fourth resting-place* in the Holy Land. It continued till the latest times to be the southern boundary of the Holy Land, so that from Dan to Beersheba became the established formula to indicate the whole country. In this district the Philistines had already begun to form settlements, and a warlike king of this race, whose hereditary name was ABIMELECH (*Father-King*), reigned in the valley of Gerar. P. S.——Beersheba lies some twelve hours'

march to the south west of Hebron. Though at that time included within the range of pasturage claimed by the Philistine flock-masters, it ultimately fell to the dominion of Israel, and in fact constituted their frontier station on the extreme south. The district was admirably adapted for grazing. Just where Abraham's well was dug, the fertile land begins to shade off by insensible degrees into a sterile and unfriendly desert. Before it to the south stretches the most extensive plain in Palestine ; while on either hand as well as northward are smooth and rolling hills, free from either rock or forest. *Dykes.*

*Beersheba* is on many accounts the most interesting locality in the South country. Its position admits of no doubt—the well-known Bir-es-Seba. Long lines of foundations mark the ancient city, or rather village, for it seems to have always been what Jerome describes it in the fourth century—a very large unwalled place, with a garrison. The ruins are about half a mile in extent, but scattered. H. B. T.

Approaching Palestine from the southern desert, we came upon an open undulating country ; green grass was seen along the lesser water-courses, and almost green sward ; while the gentle hills, covered in ordinary seasons with grass and rich pastures, were now burnt over with drought. On the northern side of the bed of a torrent, close upon the bank, are two deep wells, still called Bir-es-Seba,—the ancient Beersheba. These wells, which are circular, and stoned up with solid masonry, are some distance apart ; one 12½ feet in diameter, and 44½ deep, to the surface of the water ; the other 5 feet wide, and 42 deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance. Here, then, is the place where the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, often dwelt. *Robinson.*

One feature marks Beersheba as still the boundary between the desert and the uplands. This is the cultivation of large portions of unfenced lands for corn by the Arabs. The 7 wells vary from five to thirteen feet in diameter. The water stood at 38 feet from the surface in the one at which we were camped. Above the rock (34 feet down) it was built with finely squared large stones, hard as marble ; and the ropes of water-drawers for 4000 years have worn the edges of the hard limestone with no less than 143 flutings, the shallowest of them four inches deep. The ancient marble troughs were arranged at convenient distances round the mouth in an irregular circle. All day long, our men or the Bedouin herdsmen and their wives were drawing water in skins, and filling these troughs for the horses, camels, cattle and sheep, recalling many a scene in the lives of the patriarchs, of Rebecca and of Zipporah. We are by the very well Abraham digged. Hence he journeyed with Isaac to Mount Moriah. Hence Jacob started on his lonely travel to Padan Aram. Here he sacrificed to the Lord before setting out to join his son Joseph in Egypt. Here Samuel made his sons judges. Here Elijah parted with his faithful servant before wandering into the wilderness. Over those wide rolling hills, covered with verdure and carpeted with spring flowers, the Patriarchs used to gazë on their thousands of flocks and herds. H. B. T.

**2. Abimelech.** The official title borne by their successive chieftains was Abi-melek. Like the Padi-shah of the Persians, the name signifies "My father the king,"—fit title for a pastoral sheik, who wielded over his clansmen a kindly although irresponsible authority. *Dykes.* ——*Father king,* the common title of the Philistine kings, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptians. In Abimelech we see a totally different character from that of Pharaoh ; the character, namely, of a heathen imbued with a moral consciousness of right and open to receive a divine revelation, of which there is no trace in the account of the king of Egypt. It is not to be wondered at that the same danger should twice have occurred to Sarah, if we remember that the customs of the heathen nations, among which he was sojourning, were such as to induce Abraham to use the artifice of calling his wife his sister. E. H. B.

In what had God failed him that he should begin now to doubt of his faithfulness or power? Could the Philistines touch a hair of his head without the divine permission? Besides it ought to have occurred to him that he had once before been guilty of the same dissimulation, and had been reproved for it. Had the Philistines come suddenly upon him, and threatened to put him to death for his wife's sake we should the less have wondered that they were prevailed upon to conceal their relation to each other. But he had done the same thing many years before and had thereby ensnared Pharaoh king of Egypt, nor was he then delivered without a divine interposition, and a just rebuke from the injured monarch. Surely he ought to have profited by past experience. *Bush.*

See the parallel account (ch. 12). Sarah was now about ninety years of age, and her beauty must have been considerably impaired since the time she was taken in a similar manner by Pharaoh, king of Egypt ; but she was probably

now chosen by Abimelech, on the account of forming an *alliance* with Abraham, who was very rich. This circumstance was sufficient to cause his friendship to be courted ; and what more effectual means could Abimelech use in reference to this than the taking Sarah to be his concubine, or second wife, which in those times had no kind of disgrace attached to it? A. C.

**4. Wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?** These words appear to contain a reference to the recent awful event of Sodom's overthrow, which must have greatly impressed the surrounding country. *Bush.*——*A righteous nation, i.e.* a nation guiltless as regards this act of their king ; but it may be, that the people of Gerar were really exempt from the worst vices of Canaan, and living in a state of comparative piety and simplicity. E. H. B.——The language evidently carries with it the implication, which is abundantly warranted elsewhere in the Scripture, that from the close connection existing between them, the sins of rulers were often visited upon their people. *Bush.*——See what confidence a man may have toward God, when his heart *condemns him not.* If our consciences witness to our integrity, and that, however we may have been cheated into a snare, we have not knowingly and wittingly sinned against God, it will be our rejoicing in the day of evil. He pleads with God as Abraham had done (ch. 18 : 23), *Wilt thou slay a righteous nation*, a nation which in this matter was innocent?

**6.** God allows his plea, and admits that what he did he did in the integrity of his heart, *Yea, I know it.* Further, he lets him know that he was kept from proceeding in the sin, merely by the good hand of God upon him. *I withheld thee from sinning against me.* There is a great deal of sin devised and designed, that is never executed. As bad as things are in the world, they are not so bad as the Devil and wicked men would have them. It is God that restrains men from doing the ill they would do ; it is not from him that there is sin, but it is from him that there is not *more* sin, either by his influence upon men's minds, checking their inclination to sin, or by his providence, taking away the opportunity to sin. H.

**Against me.** The truth emphasized here needs to be indelibly graven upon our deepest and most controlling convictions : That *every wrong or evil* done against *men* is primarily and essentially *sin against God.* So David affirms in confessing to Jehovah his supreme crime against Uriah, " Against thee, *thee only*, have I sinned." B.

**7.** God had raised His servant to be a " prophet." With him God held such intimate intercourse as was not granted to other men, even in an age when Heaven lay more open to the eye of earth than it does now. This constituted him a mediator through whom the divine will and favor could reach his contemporaries. Quite recently it had emboldened him to stand as intercessor between the sinful towns and the justice of Heaven. Even Abimelech was to be indebted for the pardon of his unwitting fault to the prayers of the very man who had misled him into it. " He is a prophet," said the Voice in his dream, " and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live." *Dykes.*

This is the first time we meet with the word *prophet ;* and Abraham is the first that is honored with this name. It signifies one admitted to a nearer intercourse with God ; so as to be allowed to consult Him, and to declare His mind and will to others ; and also to prevail with Him by prayer to confer blessings upon them. *Patrick.*——Abraham is said to be a *prophet*, occupying a place of especial favor, so that his intercession would avail with God. And no less remarkable are those that follow, in which the heathen king reproves the prophet, the Friend of God, by an appeal to those first principles of moral right which bind prophets and heathens alike : " thou hast done deeds with me that ought not to be done." Abimelech shines throughout this narrative. His public announcement of the facts to his servants is the act of an injured man conscious of his own rectitude and desirous thoroughly to clear himself. *Alf.*——This king of the Philistines knows the true God, as Melchizedek also did ; in dreams he even receives communications from him ; recognizes in Abraham a " prophet," or interpreter of the divine will—one gifted with the higher vision, and permitted to hold familiar intercourse with the Lord ; and obeys with alacrity the intimations of God. He displays in this transaction a highly honorable character ; while Abraham, to his humiliation, is constrained to listen to his just reproaches. C. G. B.

**9, 10.** The serious reproof which Abimelech gave to Abraham. His reasoning with Abraham was strong, and yet very mild. Nothing could be said better ; he does not reproach him, but he fairly represents the injury Abraham had done him. **12.** He excused it from the guilt of a downright lie, by making it out, that, in a sense, she was his sister. But they to whom he said, *She is my sister*, understood that she was *so* his sister as not to be capable of being his wife ; so that it was an equivocation with an intent to deceive. H.

Some tell us, the God of the Old Testament takes the lie of Abraham under His special protection, for Abraham comes out of these two situations honored and enriched. But in both cases the sacred historian evidently takes the part of the two heathen kings against Abraham ; for he transmits to us at full length the energetic reproaches which both the monarchs address him : "What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?" And Abraham answers not a word, which signifies that he recognizes his guilt. "What hast thou done unto us? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done," said the king of the Philistines. And Abraham does not seek to justify himself ; he only endeavors to palliate his fault by explaining to Abimelech that his statement was not so complete a falsehood as at first sight it seemed. The biblical hero, the father of Israel, is, therefore, rebuked on both occasions by the two heathen princes, and this in two reproofs which have been preserved by the sacred writer. That is how Abraham comes out of these adventures justified ! As to the gifts presented to Abraham by the two kings, they too had their sin to atone for in this transaction. If it be not permitted to take from a man his wife, it is equally forbidden to take his sister. If for this act of violence they impose upon themselves a reparation toward Abraham, it is mere justice. The only one who comes out of this narrative glorified is God, who interferes to save His elect from the false position in which he has placed himself by his own fault, and who preserves from crime the two comparatively innocent heathen kings. *Godet.*

**16. A thousand pieces of silver.** This is explained subsequently, when Abraham buys the field and cave of Machpelah for four hundred *shekels* of silver, which, it is added, "he weighed to Ephron, current money with the merchant." These transactions bring out three points ; that in ancient times silver appears to have been the money metal, gold being reserved more for ornament ; that for a long period still money was not coined and stamped, but weighed—the Lydians being among the first to use coin, and that perhaps a thousand years afterward ; that even then the merchant, the *travelling* tradesman was at his business of exchange. S. C. B.

**17. So Abraham prayed unto God.** Abraham by his prevarication had brought distress on Abimelech and all his household. Being now humbled by the rebuke he had received, he prayed to God for the removal of the judgments which he had been instrumental in procuring. By this means, as far as in him lay, he counteracted and reversed the mischief that he had done. It is but seldom that we can cancel in any degree the evil we have committed ; but the course adopted by Abraham is open to us all. We may *pray* for those whom we have injured. We may beg of God to obliterate from their minds any bad impressions which either by word or deed we may have made on them. *Bush.*——Comparing merely the *natural* position of Abraham in this transaction with that of Abimelech, the Patriarch would have appeared under great disadvantage, and therefore God points out that by grace and calling he occupied another and a much higher place, from which he was not removed even when, through the weakness of his nature, he lost so much of his personal dignity. Yet while Abimelech stands so much higher than the Patriarch in point of natural dignity and moral strength, the latter has to intercede for him, that the sin, of which without knowing its full extent he had become guilty, might be forgiven, and that the plague, with which he and his household had been afflicted, might be removed. K.

If the Divine purpose is to be turned aside by the fault or blemish found in individual character, the Divine government of man is at an end, and human progress is an impossibility. Take the full stretch of time required by the Almighty in working out his purposes, and then it will be seen that under all appearances there was something which made every man chosen to leadership in the holy kingdom the best man that could have been chosen for the purpose. You say that Abimelech was better than Abraham ; but you know nothing about Abimelech but what is stated in this chapter. You have seen Abimelech at his best and you have seen Abraham at his worst, and then you have rushed to a conclusion ! This is not the right way to read history ; certainly not the right way to read the Bible. We are not to set act against act, but life against life. Take life for life, spirit for spirit, character for character, through and through, and no man who is without Christ can compare for true and lasting dignity of soul with the least in the kingdom of heaven. This principle may help us to come to larger and juster judgments of human character and human history. When I think of the meanness of Adam, the drunkenness of Noah, the selfishness of Lot, the cowardice of Abraham, the cunning of Jacob, the sensuality of David, and the inconstancy of Peter, my first wonder is that such men should have a name in the Divine his-

tory at all. But therein I show my folly and my impiety, by my setting up my morality against the righteousness of God. It is easy for me to compare the insipid respectability of some of my own acquaintance with the painful characteristics just named, and to depose the great historical characters in favor of my unimpeachable friends. But where would my friends have been *in the same circumstances?*

This, then, is the point at which I find rest when I am disturbed by the evident and painful immorality of illustrious Bible characters, viz., human nature has never been perfect in all its qualities, energies, and services; the perfection of human nature can be wrought out only by long-continued and severe probation; in choosing instruments for the representation of his will and the execution of his purposes, God has always chosen men who were best fitted *on the whole* for such ministry, though in some particulars they have pitiably failed. Consider, too, knowing human nature as we do, how beneficial a thing it was to the great men themselves to be shown now and again that they were imperfect, and that they were only great and strong as they were good—as they were true to God. We are called to holiness, to honor, to purity, to nobleness: to all that is beautiful and resplendent in character. To this end Christ died; to this end the Holy Spirit works; to this end our whole being should move in one strenuous and hopeful effort. And yet in thought, or word, or deed; by fear, or unbelief, or selfishness; by suspicion, envy, jealousy, or uncharitableness, we may slip and even fall many times by the way. But if the root of the matter be in us; if, under all our faults and sins we have that true faith which is the gift of God, and that deep love which lives through our inconstancy amounting sometimes to treason, and if we press and strive toward better things, we shall find in the last result that God's grace is greater than our sin, and that we shall be saved if only "so as by fire." J. P.

## Section 49.

### BIRTH OF ISAAC. ISHMAEL CAST OUT. COVENANT WITH ABIMELECH.

GENESIS 21 : 1-34.

1 AND the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.
2 And Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God
3 had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom
4 Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days
5 old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac
6 was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh; every one that heareth
7 will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck? for I have borne him a son in his old age.
8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast on the day that
9 Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto
10 Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her
11 son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the
12 thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.
13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed. And
14 Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and
15 wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And the water in the bottle was spent, and she
16 cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not look upon the death of the child.
17 And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth
18 thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up

19 the lad, and hold him in thine hand ; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened
her eyes, and she saw a well of water ; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and
20 gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew ; and he dwelt in the wilderness,
21 and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran : and his mother took him
a wife out of the land of Egypt.
22 And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol the captain of his host spake
23 unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest : now therefore swear unto me
here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son :
but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the
24 land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear. And Abraham reproved
25 Abimelech because of the well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.
26 And Abimelech said, I know not who hath done this thing : neither didst thou tell me,
27 neither yet heard I of it, but to-day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto
28 Abimelech ; and they two made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock
29 by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which
30 thou hast set by themselves? And he said, These seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand,
31 that it may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. Wherefore he called that
32 place Beer-sheba ; because there they sware both of them. So they made a covenant at Beer-
sheba : and Abimelech rose up, and Phicol the captain of his host, and they returned into the
33 land of the Philistines. And *Abraham* planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and called there
34 on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned in the land of the
Philistines many days.

Isaac, the son of promise, he who was begotten through the Spirit,—*i.e.*, by the power of the word of God and of faith—is now born. Ishmael, the son born after the flesh, in a natural way, grew up with him. but as a scoffer at God's word. In order that Abraham's natural affection might not be a hindrance to the fulfilment of His own purposes, God does not allow him "that was born after the flesh," from a bondwoman, to be "heir together with the son of the free-woman." In all this the great truth is taught us, which runs through the whole of Scripture, that the claims of the flesh are of no worth in God's sight, but that all is of His free grace alone. This history, therefore, is a type of higher spiritual relations (Gal. 4 : 22). But at the same time Ishmael is an example how God extends His guidance and blessing to those whom yet He does not receive into covenant. He vouchsafes a portion even of the spiritual blessing of Abraham to Ishmael's posterity. *Gerl.*

**1, 2.** In the book of Genesis, covering more than two thousand years at the lowest computation, there is not a single miracle wrought by human agency. Even Abraham works no miracle. How different from the old mythologies. Even when God himself is represented as doing things out of the general course of nature, it is only at long intervals and very rarely, as in the translation of Enoch, the judgment of the flood, the confusion of tongues, the birth of Isaac. Remember that these events were centuries apart from each other. Even if there had been a miracle for every century, which there is not, you could scarcely say that they were "very plentiful." If you look at the history perspectively, you will learn first, that all through Bible times miracles were not the rule but the exception ; and more particularly that the miracles cluster around particular epochs when there was special need for such signs of divine presence and power, as at the time of the Exodus after the long dark interval of Egyptian bondage ; at the time of Israel's declension. when the prophets Elisha and Elijah were called in a special way to witness for the Lord ; and above all, in the founding of the Church, after the long and silent interval from the Restoration to the Advent. Does not this way of looking at the sacred history put the Bible miracles in a very different and altogether reasonable light? *Gibson.*

**3. Isaac.** From the Hebrew word meaning to laugh. **9. Mocking.** "Mocking laughter." As Abraham had laughed for joy concerning Isaac, and Sarah had laughed incredulously, so now Ishmael laughed in derision, and probably in a persecuting spirit (see Gal. 4 : 29).

**12. In Isaac shall thy seed be called.** Here is the distinct limitation of the great promises of God to the descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac. God's promises gradually developed themselves in fulness, and yet were gradually restricted in extent : to Adam first ; then to Noah ; to Abraham ; then to one race or seed of Abraham, viz. Isaac ; to one of Isaac's children, viz. Jacob ; to one of the twelve

patriarchs, viz. Judah ; then to his descendant David ; and lastly to the great Son of David, the true promised Seed ; but as all centred in Him, so too from Him they have spread out to all redeemed by Him, though more especially taking effect in those who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3 : 26). E. H. B.

——*In Isaac shall seed be called to thee.* This is explained by the Apostle (Rom. 9 : 7, 8), "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called ; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God : but the children of the promise, these are counted for the seed." It is, therefore, a limitation of Abraham's seed, emphatically so called, to the line of Isaac and his descendants, to the exclusion of Ishmael. The Scriptures affirm, in reference to this very history, that "as *then* he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is *now*." The same things are grounds of offence to the carnal man in this day, as were in the days of Ishmael ; and this our Lord has expressly confirmed by saying, "because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore* the world hateth you." It appears, moreover, from the Apostle's interpretation that we must be children of promise in order to belong to the church of Christ. The mere circumstance of having descended from Christian parents, or having received the seal of the Christian covenant, or making a profession of the Christian faith, will not constitute us Christians, nor give us a title to share in the heavenly inheritance. "The son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman ;" which is in effect a sentence of expulsion passed not only on the unbelieving Jewish church, but on the whole collective body of natural and unconverted men, while it is an exclusive grant of heaven and happiness to the children of promise. Others may enjoy church privileges and make religious professions, but they only who in this world rested on the promises as their one ground of hope and joy, shall experience their accomplishment in the world to come. *Bush.*

**12, 13.** *Cast out this bondwoman* is quoted (Gal. 4 : 30) as if it had been spoken by a spirit of prophecy ; and it is the sentence passed on all hypocrites and carnal people, though they have a place and name in the visible church ; all that are born after the flesh and not born again, that rest in the law and reject the Gospel-promise, shall certainly be cast out. It is made to point particularly at the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, who, though they were the seed of Abraham, yet because they submitted not to the Gospel-covenant, were unchurched and disfranchised : and that which, above anything, provoked God to cast them off, was, their mocking and persecuting of the Gospel-church, God's Isaac, in its infancy. . . . God shows Abraham, 1. That the casting out of Ishmael was necessary to the establishment of Isaac in the rights and privileges of the covenant. *In Isaac shall thy seed be called :* both Christ and the church must descend from Abraham through the loins of Isaac ; this is the entail of the promise upon Isaac, and is quoted by the apostle to show that not all who came from Abraham's loins were the heirs of Abraham's covenant. 2. That the casting out of Ishmael should not be his ruin. He shall be a *nation, because he is thy seed.* We are not sure that it was his *eternal* ruin ; it is presumption to say that all those who are left out of the external dispensation of God's covenant are therefore excluded from all his mercies : those may be saved who are not thus honored. H.

Paul would have each of us apply, allegorically, the words, Cast out the bondwoman and her son, that is, cast out the legal mode of earning a standing in God's house, and with this legal mode cast out all the self-seeking, the servile fear of God, the self-righteousness, and the hard-heartedness it engenders. Cast out wholly from yourself the spirit of the slave, and cherish the spirit of the son and heir. Nothing but being a child of God, being born of the Spirit, can give the feeling of intimacy, confidence, unity of interest, which constitutes true religion All we do as slaves goes for nothing ; that is to say, all we do, not because we see the good of it, but because we are commanded. *Dods.*

The expulsion of Ishmael was necessary, not only from his unfitness, and in order to keep the heir of the promise unmixed with others, but also for the sake of Abraham himself, whose faith must be trained to renounce, in obedience to the Divine call, everything,—even his natural paternal affection. And in His tender mercy God once more made the trial easier, by bestowing the special promise that Ishmael should become "a nation." Therefore, although Hagar and her son were literally cast forth, with only the barest necessaries for the journey—water and bread,—this was intended chiefly in trial of Abraham's faith, and their poverty was only temporary. For, soon afterward we read in Scripture, that, before his death, Abraham had enriched his sons (by

Hagar and Keturah) with "gifts;" and at his burying Ishmael appears, as an acknowledged son, by the side of Isaac, to perform the last rites of love to their father. A. E.

**14.** The position of the words shows beyond controversy that the writer only meant that the bread and the water were put on her shoulder, and not the child. K.——The leathern bottle, as may be seen to this day in the East, and indeed in the South of Europe, is made of the whole skin of an animal (in this case of course of a small one, such as a goat or kid), the fore leg serving as the tap, and the neck as the mouth of the bottle. *Aff.*——*The child.* The sacred writer has been charged with an anachronism here, both from his use of the word "child," when Ishmael must have been from fifteen to seventeen years old. The word for "child" (*yeled*), however, is used for boys of adolescent age, as in Gen. 42 : 22, of Joseph, when he was seventeen. **15.** The growing lad would easily be exhausted with the heat and wandering; while the hardy habits of the Egyptian handmaid would enable her to endure much greater fatigue. She had hitherto led the boy by the hand, now she left him fainting and prostrate under the shelter of a tree. E. H. B.

**16. Wept.** What a proof of the Divine tenderness is there in the human heart itself, which is the organ and receptacle of so many sympathies! When we consider how exquisite are those conditions by which it is even made capable of so much suffering—the capabilities of a child's heart, of a mother's heart—what must be the nature of him who fashioned its depths and strung its chords? *Dawson.*——**17.** Jehovah is represented as himself having emotions of pity for the mother and her reckless boy as he hears her plaintive cry of nature as a mother, and as compassionately lending her aid. How beautiful the words, "God heard the voice of *the lad*, and the angel of God called to Hagar, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the *voice of the lad where he is.*" So Jesus himself was affected by the natural sorrow of the poor widow at Nain. The cry of nature can enter into the ears of the Son of God: and it will enter into the ears of his true disciples. There is no gospel spirit in that sort of Christian sternness that hardens its heart and arrests the flow of its natural sensibility toward human misery and wretchedness, because forsooth that misery comes from the wickedness and recklessness of those who suffer it. That is a mistaken sort of sternness, in a world full of sin and therefore full of suffering, that withholds the aid of sympathy and compassion from them as very sinful men, women and children. If we desire to have the word of God reach them and move them, we must learn to say to the wretched, "What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; there may be help for thee and hope for thee yet." S. R.

**Angel of God.** *Maleach Elohim*, elsewhere *Maleach Jehovah*. Supposed but wrongly to be a creature angel (Augustine, Origen, Jerome, Hofmann, Baumgarten, Tholuck, Delitzsch, Kurtz), for the reasons chiefly (1) that the term angel commonly designates a class of spiritual beings (ch. 19 : 1; 32 : 1; Job 4 : 18; Ps. 91 : 11; Matt. 13 : 41; John 20 : 12, *et passim*); (2) that the *ἄγγελος κυρίου* of the New Testament (Matt. 1 : 20; Luke 2 : 9; Acts 12 : 7) is always a created angel; (3) that the meaning of the term מַלְאָךְ, one sent, from לָאַךְ, to depute (Gesenius), one through whom work is executed from לָאַךְ, to work (Keil), implies a certain degree of subordination, which is afterward more distinctly recognized (1 Chron 21 : 27; Zech. 1 : 12); (4) that the distinction between the unrevealed and the revealed God was not then developed as in later times, and particularly since the advent of Christ—to every one of which arguments, however, it is comparatively easy to reply (cf. Keil and Lange *in loco*). With more force of reason believed to have been the Divine Being himself, who already as Jehovah had appeared to Abram (the Fathers, the Reformers, Hengstenberg, Keil, Lange, Hävernick, Nitzsch, Ebrard, Steir, Kalisch, Ainsworth, Bush, Wordsworth, Candlish), since—1. The *Maleach Jehovah* explicitly identifies himself with Jehovah (ver. 10) and Elohim (ch. 22 : 12). 2. Those to whom he makes his presence known recognize him as Divine (ch. 16 : 13; 18 : 23–33; 28 : 16–22; Exod. 3 : 6; Judges 6 : 15, 20–23; 13 : 22). 3. The Biblical writers constantly speak of him as Divine, calling him Jehovah without the least reserve (ch. 16 : 13; 18 : 1; 22 : 16; Exod. 3 : 2; Judges 6 : 12). 4. The doctrine here implied of a plurality of persons in the Godhead is in complete accordance with earlier foreshadowings (ch. 1 : 26; 11 : 7) and later revelations of the same truth. 5. The organic unity of Scripture would be broken if it could be proved that the central point in the Old Testament revelation was a creature angel, while that of the New is the incarnation of the God-Man. T. W.

**18. I will make him a great nation.** Very properly denominated *Ishmaelites* and *Hagarenes* by others, they affectedly called themselves *Saracens;* thus rejecting their descent from the concubine and challenging it from the wife of Abraham; till at last they became

noticed under that appellation by Dioscorides, by Ptolemy, and the Jerusalem Targum itself. *Whitaker.*——**20. Became an archer.** A skilful hunter and warrior also, with bow and arrow. The Saracens, who were of the posterity of Ishmael, never set their hands to the plough, but got their living for the most part by their bow : supporting themselves on wild flesh and venison and such wild fowl as the wilderness afforded, with herbs and milk. *Patrick.* ——**21. In the wilderness of Paran.** Probably the great desert, now called the desert El-Tih, *i.e.* "the wanderings," extending from the Wady-el-Arabah on the east, to the gulf of Suez on the west, and from the Sinaitic range on the south to the borders of Palestine on the north. E. H. B.

It only needs a glance beneath the surface to see that the future course of these two great branches of the Abrahamic blood was destined to be so divergent, that their currents could no longer mingle with advantage to either. So far as Ishmael was concerned, the archer and huntsman whose home was to be the desert, with his bow for his best inheritance, it was well that he should be early trained to the hardships of a nomadic chieftain. For his own comfort, he could not be too soon compelled to forego all idle dreams of one day succeeding to his father's estate. Too soon he could not be withdrawn from the presence of a brother whose priority would only inflame his envy. It was the kindest thing for the youth to send him away from his father's tents. Let it be remembered that he was not sent away from his father's God. The mercies of God are not limited to the area of His covenant. This most touching incident of the angel's reappearance to Hagar when she despaired of her boy's life in the thirsty wastes of Et-Tih, to the south of Beersheba, taught this precious truth, that God in heaven does care for those outside the circle of exceptional privilege, and reserves a blessing also for such as are not of the "seed" whom He has "blessed." It was in Isaac that the line of sacred descent was to flow. To his race were to belong "the adoption and the glory," the "law" and the "promises." Of them was to come the Christ. The highest religious advantages and the hope of the human family required to be narrowed to a single stem only, out of the various nationalities which call Abraham their progenitor. Yet God heard the cry of the lad, where he lay under a desert bush, to remind the world that the selections of His grace never mean any limitation of His love, and never spring from a partial or hard-hearted favoritism. Providence, indeed, moved in the line of Sarah's counsel, rather than of Abraham's ; but it is the spirit of Abraham, and not that of Sarah, which best interprets for us the heart of God.

For Isaac's sake, on the other hand, it was scarcely less advisable to "cast out" the bondmaid's son. His yielding disposition was ill-fitted to withstand the influence or endure the hostility of his older and more impetuous brother. Besides, the people of the covenant needed to be from the outset a separated people, kept clear of Gentile alliances. Ishmael's mother was a pagan slave ; out of her Egyptian home he married a pagan wife. From all such close contact with heathendom it was requisite to guard the selected family through which a purer faith was to be transmitted. Perhaps we may add a further consideration. No single home can long hold with safety the child of nature and the child of grace. This early family history was meant to be full of significance for the Church of God. And it had to be made clear that in God's spiritual family circle, or within their eternal home, no place can be found for such as are His only after the flesh, bearing on their body, indeed, the seal of His covenant, yet not born again of His Holy Spirit. Paul's use of this ancient household is admitted by himself to be an allegorical use of it (Gal. 4 : 21). By his supernatural conception and birth from parents who only received power to give him being at all through their faith in the promise of God, Isaac was of all men most fit to symbolize that spiritual seed who are born of God, and who display, in virtue of their heavenly birth, a faith like Abraham's. With such an origin his personal character corresponded. He not merely inherited his father's blood ; he shared his father's piety. In him, therefore, was appropriately prefigured all the moral family of God, who in every age have walked in the steps of Abraham, and who are summed up in Isaac's antitype—Jesus Christ. No less conspicuously did the wayward boy, who owed his birth to Sarah's wilful scheme and Abraham's weakness and Hagar's servitude, typify, both by outward position and spiritual character, all such as stand nominally inside the household of faith, yet have not been born of the Spirit into the free trust and love of sons, but serve God only under a bondman's constraint or with a bondman's fear. *Dykes.*

*Covenant between Abraham and Abimelech* (*vs.* 22–32).

**23. Swear unto me by God.** From this circumstance we may see the original pur-

pose, design, and spirit of an oath, viz. *Let God prosper or curse me in all that I do, as I prove true or false to my engagements!* This is still the *spirit* of all oaths, where God is called to witness. A. C.

**22-30.** In order to show that what he coveted was not simply personal friendship, but a public tribal alliance such as might outlast their individual lives and secure enduring peace betwixt their tribesmen, the prince brought with him his chief officer or second in command. This official was distinguished by a title, Phichol, which, like his master's, tells of their Semitic speech. [Its recurrence in Isaac's days (Gen. 26 : 26) seems to show that, like Pharaoh, Abimelech, and others, Phichol was purely an official title worn by successive holders of the dignity. It means "the mouth of all"—that is, the vizier or minister, who alone has immediate access to the sovereign, and through whom, therefore, the case of all suitors must pass.] The primitive ceremony of treaty-making comprised an exchange of valuable presents, as well as a mutual oath of fidelity to the terms of contract. While these preliminaries to the final ratification of the alliance were going forward, Abraham was observed to set apart seven ewe lambs from the flocks which constituted his present. On his side he had a grievance to complain of, against the recurrence of which he desired to secure himself by a separate and precise understanding. This grievance concerned the well which with immense labor his servants had dug. On the free use of that water supply depended the value of the grazing-grounds around. To Abraham's occupation of the district it was simply essential ; yet he had to complain that it had been "violently taken away" by the Philistine herdsmen. Abimelech protested his ignorance of the injury ; and his acceptance of the separated ewe lambs was a symbolical acknowledgment of Abraham's exclusive right to the possession of the well. On this understanding the league of amity was sworn, to be renewed a generation later between their successors. The centre of the pastoral life, then as now, was the well-mouth. Around its mouth stood a series of stone troughs for the watering of his cattle. Toward it, in the cool of the evening, trooped the young women with their pitchers. The permanent encampment required to be set up in convenient proximity to it. From it, at the dry season, no flock dared wander far away. Beside it every traveller halted his camels. The poetry of life, its pastimes and its business, all clustered round the well.

**31.** Beersheba means the "well of seven," or "of the oath ;" two significations which in Hebrew are very closely related. To swear, in primitive Hebrew usage, meant literally to bind one's self, as Abraham did on this occasion, by seven things, seven being from the very origin of history the divine or perfect number. When this interesting site was rediscovered by Dr. Robinson in the year 1838, the name was found adhering to it nearly unchanged in form—Bir-es-seba. Two grand wells of ancient masonry, the larger of which measures twelve feet and a half across, remain to tell of the shepherd chiefs whose flocks browsed on the surrounding hills in the gray morning of time. To this day are still set round about them stone troughs for the watering of cattle. Worn deep into their stone margins are the marks of ropes. Few monuments so venerable as these remain to transport the traveller back to patriarchal scenes. Even should the existing masonry which protects them prove to be of more recent date, there is no reason to doubt that the wells themselves are the very same as were dug by Abraham and his son. On the slope above lie scattered the remains of a town which subsequently grew up. *Dykes.*

**33.** Beersheba may have been as destitute of trees then as to-day ; for there Abram planted a grove or a tree,—an act which as clearly distinguishes him from the Arab Sheik, as did the wells which he and Abimelech dug at Beersheba. S. C. B.

**34.** The years which immediately followed these transactions were probably among the happiest in Abraham's life. Secure in the friendship of his neighbors, with his rights to water and pasture guaranteed by treaty, the shepherd chieftain dwelt at peace beside his flocks. The region around Beersheba is one of quiet beauty, and may have recalled to his remembrance the plains of his former Mesopotamian home more vividly than either Ai or Mamre. His wealth was ample. Above all, his home had now been blessed with the crown of his earthly hopes. The visible prospect which opened before the old man's eyes was at least one of a long and happy posterity. Into distant ages, pregnant with the blessings of Jehovah's covenant, he could now look forward ; and the prospect appears to have suggested to his mind a new name for God. Beneath his young tamarisk-tree by the well of the oath, Abraham proclaimed Jehovah to be El-'Olam, the Everlasting One, the God of an endless hidden future. *Dykes.*

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The church was organized in Abraham, its

ordinances confined to his family, and he was the appointed head of an organization in which all the families of the earth were to be blessed. The work and the responsibility of the Church under the Patriarchs and during their era was to cherish and nurture the little germ of a mighty tree. There was no king, and the Patriarch must be the ruler ; no priest, and he must be priest to instruct and offer sacrifices and prayer ; no church edifice, and he must erect an altar under the open heavens, wherever he was ; no city of habitation, and he must wander in tents,—the heir of the world, and yet have no "inheritance, no, not so much as to set his foot on." He must live and die in the tent. How careful must he be to keep the germ alive,—to prevent the heathen from treading it under foot ! There was no Bible in the world, and he must go directly to God himself to know his will. He had no staff on which to lean but that of faith, and no hope of the increase of the church but in a distant future. The wealth of the patriarchs was in their cattle ; their mansions were tents made of skins ; their food, the plainest. They wandered for water, and were often driven to distress by famine. They had no responsibility but to keep the organization alive. That was all that they could do. It was the planting time, and the time for the little germ to take root. *Todd.*

## Section 50.

### THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

GENESIS 22 : 1-19.

1 AND it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him,
2 Abraham ; and he said, Here am I. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah ; and offer him there for a burnt
3 offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son ; and he clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which
4 God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.
5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go
6 yonder ; and we will worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son ; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife ;
7 and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father : and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold, the fire and the wood :
8 but where is the lamb for a burnt offering ? And Abraham said, God will provide himself
9 the lamb for a burnt offering, my son : so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of ; and Abraham built the altar there, and laid the
10 wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And
11 Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham : and he said, Here am I.
12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him : for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from
13 me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns : and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a
14 burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-
15 jireh : as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be provided. And the angel
16 of the LORD called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine
17 only son : that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore ; and thy seed shall pos-

18 sess the gate of his enemies ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ;
19 because thou hast obeyed my voice. So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba ; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

The plan of the sacred narrative passes over every detail that does not bear upon the history of the covenant itself, and carries us on to a period when Isaac had reached the age of intelligence. A tradition preserved by Josephus makes Isaac twenty-five years old at the time of the crowning trial of Abraham's faith ; and we certainly gather from the Scripture narrative that he was an intelligent and willing party to the sacrifice of his life at the command of God. P. S.——The whole history of Abram may be arranged into four stages, each commencing with a personal revelation of Jehovah. The *first*, when the patriarch was called to his work and mission ; the *second*, when he received the promise of an heir, and the covenant was made with him ; the *third*, when that covenant was established in the change of his name from Abram to Abraham, and in circumcision as the sign and seal of the covenant ; the *fourth*, when his faith was tried, proved, and perfected in the offering up of Isaac. These are the high points in Abram's history, which the patriarch successively climbed, and to which all the other events of his life may be regarded as the ascent. A. E.

"Highest blessings," says Ewald, "bring highest trials." After many years of unbroken rest and satisfied desire, there burst on Abraham, like a bolt out of the clear sky, the supreme crisis of his discipline. Yet for such a crisis the whole of his career had been one long preparation. Men do not grow to be heroes in self-denial without practice. The abandonment of his original home in Ur had initiated for this man a series of sacrifices. On that there followed first the forsaking of his kindred in Haran ; then separation from Lot at Ai, and homeless wanderings in Canaan. Next came the hopes he built on Ishmael, his first-born, only to see them crossed with disappointment. Already he had virtually sacrificed one son of his heart—the lad who went forth into the wilderness like a scapegoat, to return no more. What has he left now but another son, younger and still dearer, in whom are gathered up and incarnated, as it were, the most sacred memories of the past, and his most radiant hopes for the future? This treasure only he has received from God which he has never been asked to give up for God. Can faith—can self-surrender be entire, till it has accomplished its perfect work? *Dykes.*——Looking at the whole chapter as we should at any merely human composition, we must admit that for profound pathos, for tragic force of description, it has never been surpassed. Each time that we hear it, says Augustine truly, it thrills us afresh. Compare it even with that exquisitely touching passage in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, which describes in words of such wonderful beauty the anguish of the father constrained to sacrifice his child, and it will not suffer by the comparison. *Perowne.*

Our Lord stated to the Jews : "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad." There is in Christ's statement reference to some definite occurrence in Abraham's history. This was unquestionably the transaction of Moriah. In the interposition which stayed his hand when about to slay his son Isaac and in the substitute found, the patriarch saw his own prophecy receive its fulfilment in a way which gave pre-intimation of the appearance of Jehovah himself. Nor should it be overlooked, that in the promise renewed to Abraham on this occasion the spiritual element was more distinctly brought out than at any time since his call, and in the very words then employed. D. M.

The moment man went wrong and went down under the temptation of his self-will and the sorcery of his senses, the love of God in Christ began to move for his restoration. The ages of sacred history were but the steady steps in the mighty march of that Christly Providence. The books of the Bible are the record of the process, growing clearer and brighter as it works out to its perfect consummation. The Lord, becoming man, born of a woman, dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory ; even we, men, with these eyes that passion had clouded, we "beheld His glory full of grace and truth." Holy living, miracles of mercy, wonderful teaching, words such as man never spake, heavenly disinterestedness, not having where to lay his head, Satan visibly conquered—all these accomplished no redemption. The race was too far gone, the sin was too deep-struck for that. All they did was to gather to the Son of Man a little band of interested, believing, timid disciples, ready to flee from him as soon as the cross came in sight. At last, when the world's "hour" is full come, the two great further acts are done. First, the Sacrifice, then, the victory. Both have been foretold in that living figure, or that acted prophecy, far back in the very morning of man's history. Abraham

binds his only son on the altar. Here is the typical sacrifice. The son's life is given back, and he is loosed from the altar. Here is the typical resurrection. So the Epistle to the Hebrews opens that mystical transaction: "Abraham offered up Isaac, his only-begotten son, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure." First, the cross; then, the breaking of the sepulchre. "For if we have been planted in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." First, a full, perfect, sufficient propitiation, by such suffering as only a divine humanity, having God entered into it, could suffer; then, the raising up and enfranchisement of the rescued soul in the resurrection. First, pardon, then life eternal; but both by the same inward-working power, received through faith; not merely by outward and past events in history, but by these transferred through this appropriating energy of faith into the heart—the law of the *Spirit of Life* in Christ Jesus making us free from the law of *sin and death*. F. D. H.

1. The words "after these things," refer us to all that had been passing before. Abraham, after long wanderings and many trials, is presented to us in the last chapter as eminently comforted and in a condition of peaceful prosperity. The promised, longed-for son has been given to him; his other son Ishmael, though no longer in his household, is growing up and prospering, Abraham is in treaty and at peace with his neighbors the Philistines, he sojourns for many days at Beersheba and its neighborhood, with abundance of cattle, in a place well watered and fertile. Thus it appears to have been with him till now, when his son, his only son Isaac, whom he loved, is growing up to early manhood, his chief comfort and stay and hope in this world. But times of prosperity are often times when trial is needed for us, and so we find it here. E. H. B.

**Prove.** The A. V. reads *God did tempt Abraham.* Hebrew, *nissah, tried, proved.* This literal rendering of the term, given in the old Geneva version, "God did *prove* Abraham," goes at once to correct the erroneous impression that might possibly be received from our English word "tempt," which usually has the sense of *exciting to sin.* But in this sense we are expressly assured (James 1 : 13) that "God is not *tempted* of evil, neither *tempteth* he any man;" he neither deceives any man's judgment nor perverts his will, nor seduces his affections, nor does anything else that can subject him to the blame of men's sins. Temptation in this bad sense always proceeds from the malice of Satan working on the corruptions of our own hearts. God may, however, consistently with all his perfections, by his providence, bring his creatures into circumstances of *special probation*, not for the purpose of giving *him* information, but in order to manifest to themselves and to others the prevailing dispositions of their hearts. In this sense of *trying, putting to the proof, bringing to the test*, the original term in many other instances is used in reference to the Most High, and always in such a way as to leave his attributes unimpeached. Deut. 13 : 3, "For the Lord your God (*nissah*) *proveth* you, to know (*i.e.* to make known) whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul." *Bush.*——The Arabic version renders it very correctly, "God did prove Abraham." Words having the sense of "try" may generally be used either in a good or a bad sense. This particular word has generally a good sense, except where men are said to try or tempt God, *e.g.* (Ex. 17 : 2; Nu. 14 : 22; De. 6 : 16). The whole history of Abraham is a history of his moral and spiritual education by the teaching of God himself. He was to be the head of the chosen seed, the father of the faithful, himself the type of justifying faith. Here then, after long schooling and training, in which already there had been many trials, one great test of his now matured and strengthened faith is ordained by God. E. H. B.——The same word occurs in 1 Kings 10 : 1, where it is said the Queen of Sheba came to "prove" Solomon. So also in Deut. 4 : 34; where the word is represented by "assayed," and likewise "temptation." The same word occurs in several other passages also, in which God is represented, either in fact or in explicit terms, as tempting, *i.e.*, trying or proving His servants. *Loraine.*

If we believe at all in God's oversight of our life—in other words, in His guiding and "leading" hand—we must feel that there are times and, as it were, places of "exploration" to which we do come under His direction; circumstances of trial, opportunities, in other words, of choosing between good and evil, which we cannot avoid, which confront us without our seeking. *Vaughan.*——According to the simplest notion of temptation, as merely equivalent to trial, God does so tempt man as to put before him special circumstances which may try or prove him, and so bring out that good or evil within him which, though known to God, is perhaps unknown to the man himself, and still more to his fellow-men. In this way God was said to tempt Abraham, where the true nature

of the temptation is well expressed in one of the old Greek versions, that of Symmachus, who paraphrases it "God glorified Abraham," *i.e.*, gave him a special opportunity of showing his entire trust in God, and thus of obtaining the glorious title of the "father of the faithful" to all times In this sense then, first, God is said to tempt men when He specially tries them, in order either to bring out the good which is in them, or else give them and others by their example, a warning of the evil which lurks unsuspected within their hearts, this being wholly for man's good. *Karslake.*——What God often does, what He did in the case of Abraham, of Job, and especially of our Lord himself, is to expose a man in a very critical and precarious position, to bring him in the course of his life into circumstances where sin is very easy, holiness very difficult. We read that it was "of the Spirit" that "Jesus was led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil;" a very instructive intimation, giving us in one view all the parties concerned. The human nature, with its liability to temptation, its capability to suffer and to enjoy ; the Divine nature, ordering the circumstances which may permit the temptation to take place ; and the diabolical nature, *the* tempter. *Dods.*

This was not the first time that God tried Abraham. He had tried him all his life. But here it is said, in marked phrase, that God did try Abraham because it is the crucial instance of his life, the hardest trial, perhaps, of all history. Temptation, trial, is the very workshop of God. On that anvil all his saints have been hammered ; in that fire they have all been purified. But here the hammer smites most heavily, here the flame of the fire has been most searching. . . . This command was fitted to purify Abraham's faith. God had been training him from the first to live only by his promise. At length, when Isaac was born, he welcomed him as the child of promise. But years pass on. The child had grown up before him and twined himself about his heart, till at last he has almost forgotten the promise in the child of promise. "Isaac," it has been strikingly said, "the precious late-won gift, is still for Abraham too exclusively a merely natural blessing, a child like other children though born of the true mother, Abraham's son only because he has been born to him and brought up in his house. Pangs, the pangs of a soul wrestling in faith, he has not felt for him since his birth, and yet that is the only spiritual, and therefore the only really abiding, blessing which we are able to make our own through the fightings and wrestlings of the believing heart. Therefore, now that in Isaac the supreme blessing has been won, there must also take place the supreme trial of Abraham's faith and obedience." (*Ewald.*) *Perowne.*

**2. And He said.** The command proceeded immediately from God Himself : but how, and in what manner, it was conveyed to Abraham, we are nowhere told. But Abraham had sufficient proof (whatever that proof was) that the several revelations, respecting both God's former *promises* and the present severe *command*, did really proceed from God. *Bp. Conybeare.*——Each designation mounts upward in climax after the other : thy son, thine only one,—whom thou lovest, Isaac, the personal designation coming last, and clenching as it were the identification of the very heir of the promise himself. There was in the command no softening, but rather all aggravation, of the trial. *Alf.*——In more ways than one Isaac might be called his "only son." He was the only son by his wife Sarah : he was the only son of promise, and to whom the promises were given and assured : by the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael he was the only son left to his father's house. The words, emphatic as they are, "Thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest," are all calculated to impress and enhance the sacrifice which Abraham is called on to make. E. H. B.

The words in which God's command was couched were those of accumulated keenness. God said, Take now thy son, long expected and waited for, thine heir, full of promise and so dear to thee! To subdue the father in the heart, *that* a Roman has done, and calmly signed his son's death-warrant ; but to subdue it not with Roman hardness, but with deep trust in God and faith in his providence, saying, It is not hate, but love, that requires this,—this was the nobleness, this the fierce difficulty, of Abraham's sacrifice. *Robertson.*——It is characteristic of the severe and noble reserve of Scripture, that it lays no stress upon this side of the trial. Save for certain endearing expressions piled up by the divine voice when it required the sacrifice, there is nothing in the narrative to hint how much obedience must have cost the father. What is brought into relief is rather the test which was applied to Abraham's confidence in the promises of God's covenant. To slay Isaac, the unripe, the childless—was it not to slay the future of the covenant and the blessing for mankind? *Dykes.*

Abraham had not only to contend with *natural affection*, but *with reason;* not only *with reason*,

but *with faith!* He was, in offering up Isaac, to destroy all his hopes. And all this was to be done by himself: with his own hand he was at one stroke to cut off all his comforts. The execution of such a sentence was as harsh and bitter to flesh and blood, as to be his own executioner. *Manton.*——It was, therefore, a trial in the strongest sense, a trial of Abraham's faith, whether it was capable of such implicit confidence in God, such profound regard to His will, and such self-denial in His service, as at the divine bidding to give up the best and dearest—what in the circumstances must even have been dearer to him than his own life. Not that God really intended the surrender of Isaac to death, but only the proof of such a surrender in the heart of His servant; and such a proof could only have been found in an unconditional command to sacrifice, and an unresisting compliance with the command up to the final step in the process. This, however, was not all. In the command to perform such a sacrifice, there was a *tempting* as well as a *trying* of Abraham; since the thing required at his hands seemed to be an enacting of the most revolting rite of heathenism; and at the same time to war with the oracle already given concerning Isaac, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." According to this word, God's purpose to bless was destined to have its accomplishment especially and peculiarly through Isaac; so that to slay such a son appeared like slaying the very word of God, and extinguishing the hope of the world. And yet, in heart and purpose at least, it must be done. It was no freak of arbitrary power to command the sacrifice. It had for its object the outward and palpable exhibition of the great truth, that God's method of working in the covenant of grace must have its counterpart in man's. The one must be the reflex of the other. God, in blessing Abraham, triumphs over nature; and Abraham triumphs after the same manner in proportion as he is blessed. He receives a special gift from the grace of God, and he freely surrenders it again to Him who gave it. He is pre-eminently honored by God's word of promise, and he is ready in turn to hazard all for its honor. And Isaac, the child of promise—the type in his outward history of all who should be proper subjects or channels of blessing—also must concur in the act: on the altar he must sanctify himself to God, as a sign to all who would possess the higher life of grace, how it implies and carries along with it a devout surrender of the natural life to the service and glory of Him who has redeemed it. P. F.

**Moriah.** The view almost universally accepted is that the Mount Moriah of the Chronicles is identical with the mountain in the land of Moriah in this chapter, and that the spot on which Jehovah appeared to David, and on which the Temple was built, is the very spot of the sacrifice of Isaac. Knobel observes (1) that this greatest of all religious acts points to a more important sanctuary than Shechem; (2) that the name "mountain of Jehovah" denotes everywhere else either Jerusalem or Sinai, the latter being here of course out of the question; and (3) that the journey from Beersheba by way of Hebron and Jerusalem to Shechem, according to Robinson's "Itinerary," occupies about thirty-five hours, which would make the distance too great for Abraham and Isaac to traverse in three days on foot *Perowne.*——No sufficient reason has been alleged against this identification except that in v. 4 it is said that "Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off," whereas Mount Zion is said not to be conspicuous from a great distance. Thence Bleek, De Wette, Tuch, Stanley, and Grove, have referred to Moreh (Gen. 12 : 6), and attempted to identify the site of the sacrifice with "the natural altar on the summit of Mount Gerizim," which the Samaritans assert to be the scene of the sacrifice. Really, however, the words in v. 4 mean nothing more than this, that Abraham saw the spot to which he had been directed at some little distance off. E. H. B.

Travelling at the ordinary rate of the country, Jerusalem would just be reached on the third day (as required by this narrative) from Beersheba; to reach Nablous (Moreh) in the same time *is impossible*, at the pace of fellahin with their asses. H. B. T.——As the name itself (land of Moriah), so the distance mentioned leads us to suppose that it was in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. From Bir es-Seba *Robinson* took twenty hours and twenty-five minutes to Jerusalem, travelling by the straight way and with camels—a distance, therefore, which Abraham could easily have made in three days. *Robinson* took fourteen hours and thirty minutes to travel with mules by the straight road from Jerusalem to Sychem (Nabulus), so that the entire distance from Beersheba amounted to thirty-five hours, which Abraham could not have made in three days. But even the name points to the neighborhood of Jerusalem. The designation *Moriah*, applied in verse 2 to the whole district, was at a later period confined to that particular mountain where this remarkable event had taken place. There afterward the temple was built. K.

**Offer him for a burnt-offering.** The sacrifice of a child by its parent in honor of the

Deity was by no means foreign either to the religious conceptions amid which Abraham was living, or to the worship which probably prevailed around him. Few readers have sufficiently realized how ancient or widespread among primitive religions was a custom which has come to be associated only with the lowest type of barbarism. Even the milder faiths of early Greece sprang out of, or were grafted on, the same original idolatry of the generative and productive forces in nature which found favor among older races in Babylon, Phœnicia, and Canaan. Wherever the influence of that dark religion stretched, it bore of necessity two ghastly fruits—cruelty and lust ; the orgies of the grove and the sacrifice of human blood. As Abraham had always lived among neighbors whose religion was saturated with those feelings and beliefs out of which the practice of sacrificing children originated, and whose actual worship demanded at its highest moments such an expression, it is quite conceivable how the command to slay his son failed to strike him as, on the face of it, irreconcilable with true religion. And no such prohibition of human sacrifice as was subsequently given to Moses had been given to Abraham. Further, the stage of religious teaching at which mankind then stood, and the religious atmosphere in which men moved, makes it intelligible how Abraham could accept such a voice from Heaven in the simplicity of a faith which did not stumble, where the saints of any later time would certainly have stumbled. *Dykes.*

**3.** We must not detract from the trial by importing into the circumstances our knowledge of the issue. Abraham had absolutely no assurance and no knowledge beyond that of his present duty. All he had to lay hold upon was the previous promise, and the character and faithfulness of the covenant God, who now bade him offer this sacrifice. Sharp as the contest must have been, it was brief. It lasted just one night ; and next morning, without having taken "counsel with flesh and blood," Abraham, with his son Isaac and two servants, were on their way to "the land of Moriah." A. E.——As Abraham is the pattern *of believing*, so he is *of obeying*. He received the promises, as a figure of our faith ; he offered up his son, as a figure of our obedience. He obeyed *readily* and *willingly*. "Abraham rose early in the morning." He obeyed, also, *resolutely*. He conceals it from his wife, from his servants, nay, from Isaac himself, that so he might not be diverted from his purpose. *Manton.*

Few passages in literature carry a deeper pathos than the words which tell how, in the fresh dawn, the aged lord of that camp crept away on foot out of the midst of his retainers' tents. Not to a single soul did the old man dare to confide his purpose. The entreaties of a mother less resolute than himself might have overborne his firmness. The quieter anguish of a young and gentle heart, shrinking from too early death, might have proved more than he could endure. Two slow days of walking along rugged paths, and two still slower nights spent in sleepless thought, must have brought such tortures of delay as principle alone, and not impulse, could sustain. *Dykes.*——Never any gold was tried in so hot a fire. Who but Abraham would not have expostulated with God? But God knew that he spake to an Abraham, and Abraham knew that he had to do with a God : faith taught him not to argue, but obey. In a holy wilfulness he either forgets nature, or despises her ; he is sure that what God commands, is good ; that what he promises, is infallible ; and therefore is careless of the means, and trusts to the end. In matters of God, whosoever consults with flesh and blood shall never offer up his Isaac to God : there needs no counsellor when we know God is the commander : here is neither grudging, nor deliberating, nor delaying : his faith would not suffer him so much as to be sorry for that he must do. Sarah herself may not know of God's charge and her husband's purpose, lest her affection should have overcome her faith. *Bp. H.*

**4. On the third day.** From Beersheba to the Salem of Melchizedek, near which this hill is supposed to have been, is about forty-five miles. If they proceeded fifteen miles on the first broken day, twenty on the second, and ten on the third, they would come within sight of the place early on the third day. M.

**5. I and the lad will go—and come again.** How could Abraham consistently with truth say this, when he knew he was going to make his son a *burnt-offering?* The Apostle answers for him : *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac—accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure.* He knew that his birth was a kind of life from the dead—that the promise of God was most positive, *In Isaac shall thy seed be called,*—that this promise could not fail—that it was his duty to obey the command of his Maker ; and that it was as easy for God to restore him to life after he had been a burnt-offering, as it was for him to give him life in the beginning. Therefore he went fully purposed to offer his son, and yet confidently

expecting to have him restored to life again. *We will go yonder, and worship*, perform a solemn act of devotion which God requires, *and come again to you.* A. C.

Abraham's faith had stood all former tests. It had been strong enough to break the ties that bound him to country, home, and kindred It had patiently endured the many and long delays in the fulfilling of the promises. It had risen above all the obstacles, physical and moral, that stood in the way of their accomplishment. It had accepted Isaac, and given up Ishmael. Would it stand the last demand, to give up to God the best loved thing on earth ; to do what appeared not only alien to God's own character, but contrary to his own word and promise ? For herein lay the peculiarity and severity of the trial as a test of faith. The command and the promise were in conflict. If he obeyed the command he frustrated the promise ; if he kept by the promise he must break the command. But one way of reconciling them could be even fancied, and, dim though it was, the quick eye of faith discerned it. " He accounted that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead." W. H.

Observe that the apostle magnifies the greatness of the trial on the one hand, and of the heroic faith of Abraham on the other. He speaks of him as actually having offered up Isaac ; for he had gone through all the agony of heart just as completely as though he had slain his son. Moreover, he brings into view the fact that it was a case not only to try the heart, but to astound and bewilder the reason. For " he that had received the promises," promises that seemed all bound up in the life of Isaac, and in his life all the promises depended ; and yet, in spite both of the revolt of his heart and the dictates of reason to the contrary, he was ready at the command of God to offer him up. Thus the apostle, instead of any attempt to mitigate and explain away the old record, aims to bring out the views of it which to reason magnify the difficulties. The strength and beauty of his faith is in this, that somehow God will provide for all these difficulties, though he sees not how. Somehow God will work out all the contradictions. It is faith strengthened by experience. God has given Isaac after all my doubts and sinful efforts to aid God in working out his plans. God has given him in the first place as if by miracle ; and why may I not by miracle receive him from the dead ? Of course again he will in some way bring out the plans of his grace. This is obviously the aspect in which this story of Abraham's offering Isaac presented itself to the mind of the inspired apostle. And for this reason he twice cites Abraham—first as illustrating the faith that is unto salvation—as in leaving all to follow Jehovah. Then the second as an illustration of the *heroism* of a faith that has strengthened by experience of the faithfulness of Jehovah. S. R.

**7, 8.** Listen to the brief dialogue :—" My father, behold the fire and the wood ; but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering ?" " My son, God will provide Himself the lamb for the burnt-offering." The heart's deepest grief was never more eloquently portrayed. No sobs, no tears, no words telling of the struggle within. The anguish lies too deep for utterance. The sculptor, when he would express a grief that he could not express, bowed and veiled the face of the mourner ; and the veiling of the agony here is, in fact, its most pathetic expression. *Perowne.*——The repetition of " his father, my father, my son" ; the artlessness of Isaac's question,—the high resignation of Abraham's answer, and then the result, repeated from before, and (notwithstanding,—still) they went both of them together, the father in his noble resolve, the son in his trusting simplicity, these mark the sacred narrative as standing in the very first place for truth and for power. This whole incident is to the Christian mind full of type and suggestion of the most sacred kind. *Alf.*

**9. Bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar.** The love of God the Father cannot be better expressed than by this instance. Abraham readily gives his only, his beloved son, to be sacrificed : so God gave His only Son. *Bp. Wilson.*——O holy emulation of faith ! O blessed agreement of the sacrificer and oblation ! Abraham is as ready to take, as Isaac to give ; he binds those dear hands, which are more straitly bound with the cords of duty and resolution : he lays his sacrifice upon the wood, which now beforehand burnt inwardly with the heavenly fire of zeal and devotion. *Bp. H.*—— " Abraham offered Isaac," says the Apostle James. He *purposed* it ; and if God had not interfered to prevent it, he would actually have done it. God counts *that* to be done which is about to be done ; and takes notice of what is in the heart, though it be not brought into practice and actual accomplishment. Hence we learn that *purposes of obedience*, if, like Abraham's, *serious and resolved, are accepted for obedience. Manton.*

Abraham's ambiguous reply that " God would provide," though it spoke an unconscious prophecy, betrays no anticipation of any escape from the awful task which oppressed him. What it

does reveal is, how hard he found it to be to break the dreadful secret. By what means at last he contrived to break it, or how Isaac received the heavy tidings ; with what surprising sweetness and courage he also bowed to the supreme will, and with a child's love laid his life upon the altar of a parent's duty—all this is left for each one of us to picture for himself. *Dykes.*——What passed then between father and son, as Abraham told him of the Divine command, and inculcated the great duty of submission, remains untold. But there was no attempt at escape—no remonstrance, no resistance. He gave himself willingly to be bound and to be laid upon the altar. That moment, when his father grasped the knife and the flash of its cold glittering blade fell upon his eye, could he ever forget ; or could there ever pass from his memory the sudden sound of the arresting voice, the sight of the lamb caught in the thicket, followed up by the oath and blessing pronounced upon Abraham and his seed ? If ever any one in early life had the benefit and blessedness of self-sacrifice and entire submission to the will of God imprinted sensibly upon the heart, it was Isaac in that hour. His heroic act, second only to that of his father, showed how fully he had imbibed his father's spirit—the one near the close of his career, the other at its beginning—revealing how ready they both were to give all up to God. No higher evidence of the simplicity and strength of Isaac's faith in God could have been given. W. H.——For when he resisted not his father, and allowed himself to be bound and laid on the altar, he entered into the spirit of Abraham, he took upon himself his faith, and thus showed himself truly the heir to the promises. Nor can we forget how this surrender of the firstborn was the first of that dedication of all the firstborn unto God, which afterward the law demanded, and which meant that in the firstborn we should consecrate all and everything unto the Lord. A. E.

His sacrifice on Moriah was the requisite condition of his succession to Abraham's place ; it was the only suitable celebration of his majority. Abraham himself had been able to enter into covenant with God only by sacrifice ; and sacrifice not of a dead and external kind, but vivified by an actual surrender of himself to God, and by a true perception of God's holiness and requirements. A true resignation of self, in whatever outward form this resignation may appear, is required that we may become one with God in His holy purposes and in His eternal blessedness. There could be no doubt that Abraham had found a true heir, when Isaac laid himself on the altar and steadied his heart to receive the knife. Dearer to God, and of immeasurably greater value than any service, was this surrender of himself into the hand of his Father and his God. In this was promise of all service and all loving fellowship. *Dods.*

**9, 10.** The erection of a rude stone altar ; the arrangement upon it of the fagots ; the binding of Isaac ; the solemn act which laid his helpless figure for an offering to Heaven upon the rude sticks ; nay, even that final gesture of the officiating priest which raised his sacrificial knife to strike,—everything is pictured to the eye, in order that the heart of the reader may well understand and ponder how unreserved was the surrender which this father had made of this son to die, how complete was the triumph of his faith ! In that triumph Abraham's religious experience attained its summit. What other men have done through fear of the Almighty, he did for love. God is to this man a friend to be trusted, even though He slay ; to be loved better than an only son ; to be obeyed where reason refuses its light to justify the command, and nature with all her voices can only exclaim against it. It is the perfection of a man's friendship with God to be thus loyal. It puts the all-perfect Lord, Whose name is Love, in His just place. It pays Him such honor as is His due. *Dykes.*

The self-sacrifice in the act is obvious from the history. The Patriarch had through life felt himself the minister and instrument of a great Divine design with respect to mankind. He had lived with a gigantic prospect before him, with an immense expanding blessing which was one day to include all nations and be the restoration of the world. This vast plan, his part in which had been the work of his life and had filled his mind with immeasurable hopes, as it had been sown in his son, would perish with his son. Then all was over and his life had come to nothing. More, the child himself upon whom such a promise hung, such boundless hope and vast calculation, who was loved all the more with a father's love because he was the harbinger of the prophet's greatness and the symbol of life's purpose answered, he was to be surrendered too. But in the mind of the Patriarch rose boundless hope also upon an Almighty Being. It is hope cherished while all is dark around us that exhibits the principle in its greatness and in its true energy ; hope resting upon that ultimate Power at the very root of things which can reverse every catastrophe and rectify all mistakes. To hold on to this root is hope withdrawn into its last fastness ; without aid from

any sight, grasping with an iron force the rock itself, the foundation of Sovereign Will upon which the universe stands, and saying to itself, "The whole may shake, if this foundation remaineth sure." This was the infinite hope of Abraham. Doubtless while he lifted up the knife to slay his son, the sun was turned to darkness to him, the stars left their places, and heaven and earth vanished from his sight; to the eye of sense all was gone that life had built up, and the promise had come actually to an end forevermore. But to the friend of God all was still as certain as ever, all absolutely sure and fixed; the end, the promise, nay even the son of promise, even he in the fire of the burnt-offering was not gone, because that was near and close at hand which could restore; the great Power which could reverse everything. A voice within said, All this can be undone and pass away like a dream of the night; and the heir was safe in the strong hope of him who "accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." *Mozley.*

Thus the sublimest heights of holiness were reached, simply because faith had struck its roots so deeply within, and had so closely united the soul of the patriarch to the will and perfections of Jehovah. This high surrender of the human to the divine, and holy self-consecration to the will and service of God, was beyond all doubt, like the other things recorded in Abraham's life, of the nature of a revelation. It was not intended to terminate in the patriarch and his son, but in them, as the sacred roots of the covenant people, to show in outward and corporeal representation what in spirit ought to be perpetually repeating itself in their individual and collective history. It proclaimed to them through all their generations, that the covenant required of its members lives of unshrinking and devoted application to the service of God—yielding to no weak misgivings or corrupt solicitations of the flesh—staggering at no difficulties presented by the world; and also that it rendered such a course possible by the ground and scope it afforded for the exercise of faith in the sustaining grace and might of Jehovah. P. F.

**11. The Angel of the Lord called unto him.** A moment more, and the victim would have been smitten; but in that moment the awful mandate is countermanded. A voice too familiar to Abraham not to be at once recognized as that of God himself addresses him out of heaven. Though termed an Angel, yet it is evident from the manner in which he here speaks of himself, and from what is said (v. 12, 16), that he was not a created being, but was no other than the divine personage so often introduced into the sacred narrative under the title of the Angel Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant. *Bush.*

**Lay not thine hand upon the lad.** The voice of God was never so welcome, never so sweet, never so seasonable as now: it was the trial, that God intended, not the fact; Isaac is sacrificed, and is yet alive: and now both of them are more happy in that they would have done, than they could have been distressed if they had done it. God's charges are ofttimes harsh in the beginnings and proceeding, but in the conclusion always comfortable: true spiritual comforts are commonly late and sudden: God defers on purpose that our trials may be perfect, our deliverance welcome, our recompense glorious; Isaac had never been so precious to his father, if he had not been recovered from death; if he had not been as miraculously restored as given: Abraham had never been so blessed in his seed, if he had not neglected Isaac for God. The only way to find comfort in any earthly thing, is to surrender it, in a faithful carelessness, into the hands of God. *Bp. H.*——God did *try* Abraham; there is the key to the command. The object was to test obedience to the uttermost. He demanded this the very hardest conceivable proof of obedience because He would teach his servant, and, through him, teach the world at large, the moral majesty, the all-conquering might of faith. But God did not intend that Isaac should be put to death. At the decisive moment by a voice from heaven He interferes to prevent the sacrifice, He forbids the deed of murder *Perowne.*——The obedience of Abraham *was* pleasing in the sight of God, and therefore the command was given. The actual death of Isaac would not have been pleasing to Him, and therefore the act was stopped. Human sacrifice finds no real sanction here. *Jellett.*

For once a command was issued, which, while it perfectly tested in the first instance the willingness and thoroughness of Abraham's loyalty without doing outrage to his previous knowledge of God, served also in the end to teach, in a far more memorable and impressive fashion than any verbal lesson could have done, that the true God is one Who has no pleasure in such unnatural offerings. The issue of the transaction ought to have been the banishment of cruelty forever from the worship of Jehovah. These words: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him," contained a virtual condemnation, not merely of

human sacrifice, but also of every analogous barbarity in the mode of worship. *Dykes.*——The sacrifice, the resignation of the will, in the father and the son, was accepted ; the literal sacrifice of the act was repelled. On the one hand, the great principle was proclaimed, that mercy is better than sacrifice,—that the sacrifice of self is the highest and holiest offering that God can receive. On the other hand, the inhuman superstitions, toward which the ancient ceremonial of sacrifice was perpetually tending, were condemned. A. P. S.——By the substitution of Abraham's ram "in the stead of his son," a fresh sanction was put upon the primeval practice of animal sacrifice, in order to express the redemption of a forfeited life, or the dedication of a grateful heart. *Dykes.*

**Now I know that thou fearest God.** God tried Abraham, not that He might learn what He knew already, but that He might show to others, with how great justice He loved the patriarch. *Theodoret.*——It is common for men to say that they *know* that which they have found out by special trial, which they have learned as the result of experiment ; and the Most High is here pleased to adopt the same language. Thus Ps. 139 : 23, it is said, "Search me, O God, and *know* my heart ;" though the psalmist had just before said (v. 2), "Thou understandest my thoughts afar off." For himself he needed not the patriarch's obedience to discover to him the state of his mind ; but for our sakes he made the exhibition of Abraham's obedience a ground for acknowledging the existence of the inward principle from which it sprang. It is by a holy and obedient deference to the divine authority that faith and fear are made manifest. As a sinner, Abraham was justified by faith only ; but as a professing believer, he was justified by the works which his faith produced. This view will reconcile the apparent discrepancy of Paul and James in regard to Abraham's justification. They both allege his case as an example of what they are teaching, but the one respects him as *ungodly*, the other as *godly*. In the first instance he is justified by faith exclusive of works ; in the last by faith, as producing works, and thereby proving him the friend of God. *Bush.*

God delights to call forth his champions to meet with great temptations, to make them bear crosses of more than ordinary weight ; as commanders in war put men of most valor and skill upon the hardest services. God sets some strong trial upon a strong Christian, made strong by his own grace ; and by his victory makes it appear to the world that though there is a great deal of the counterfeit coin of profession in religion yet some there are that have the power, the reality of it, and that it is not an invention, but there is truth in it, that the invincible grace, the very Spirit of God, dwells in the hearts of true believers. *Leighton.*

**13. Took the ram and offered him for a burnt-offering.** The offering of Isaac was neither piacular nor propitiatory ; Abraham had committed no guilt, and apprehended no danger ; the immolation of his only son seemed forever to deprive him of that blessing which was nearest to his heart, the parentage of a numerous and powerful tribe. It was a simple act of unhesitating obedience to the divine command ; the last proof of perfect reliance on the certain accomplishment of the divine promises. *Milman.*——The human sacrifices of the ancient world were in atonement for public crimes, and were offered up in great national emergencies. They were at any rate propitiatory, and supposed bloodshed, or sacrilege, or some heinous crime, as the occasion of them. But here is no crime mentioned for which propitiation is wanted. The trial upon which the life of the Patriarch turns is clear and conspicuous ; it demands a sacrifice which is not propitiatory, but which is simply a trial of faith. Yet it was designed that it should at the same time be a type and figure of the great Propitiation. In the sacrifice of Abraham and in the sacrifice on the Cross the difference of scope and design in regard to atonement leaves still a common external ground of surrender ; and the outward action or representation contained in the former, of a father offering up his only son upon the altar of wood, fulfils all the outward requirements of a type. *Mozley.*——Of all the Prophetic Types, this one, in the commanded sacrifice of Isaac, appears to be among the most significant. It stands at the head of the dispensation of Revealed Religion, as reduced into covenant with the people of God in the person of their Founder and Progenitor. Being thus displayed in the history of the *Father of the Faithful*, it seems to be wrought into the foundations of Faith. In the surrender to sacrifice of a beloved son the Patriarchal Church *begins* with an adumbration of the Christian reality. *Davison.*

The fathers recognize the double type in this whole history. The father with full deliberate purpose offering up his dearly beloved, only-begotten son, the son willingly obedient unto death, the wood for the sacrifice carried by the victim up the hill, the sacrifice fulfilled in purpose though not in act, and then the father re-

ceiving his son in a figure from the dead after three days of death in the father's purpose and belief ; all this is as much an actual prophecy of the sacrifice and resurrection of the Son of God as was possible without a true slaying of Isaac, for which was substituted the slaying of the ram. That which Isaac's sacrifice wanted to make it perfect as a type was actual death and the notion of substitution. These therefore were supplied by the death of the ram, and his substitution for a human life. Not only was Isaac thus made the most memorable type of the Redeemer of the world (Isaac, who otherwise seems less noticeable than either Abraham or Jacob), but also that Abraham had the singular honor of representing the highest, holiest God and Father, who "spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all." E. H. B.

We leap, as by a natural instinct, from the sacrifice in the land of Moriah to the sacrifice of Calvary. There are many differences ; there is a danger of exaggerating the resemblance, or of confounding in either case what is subordinate with what is essential. But the general feeling of Christendom has in this respect not gone far astray. Each event, if we look at it well and understand it rightly, will serve to explain the other. Human sacrifice, as we have seen, which was in outward form nearest to the offering of Isaac, was in fact and in spirit most entirely condemned and repudiated by it. The union of parental love with the total denial of self, is held up in both cases as the highest model of human, and therefore as the shadow of divine love ; "sacrifice" is rejected, but "to do thy will, O God," is accepted. In the moral significance of this history the Jew and the Christian are agreed. Even to this present day the Jew, though he has rejected the true propitiation, sees in the binding of Isaac on the altar a meritorious deed, which still pleads on behalf of Israel with God. And while the Christian Church prays to God for pardon and blessing for the merits and death of Jesus Christ, the Jewish synagogue beseeches Him to have compassion upon it for the sake of the binding of Isaac. Viewed in this light as a part of the divine teaching of the world, we find in this history the wisdom of God. We find an answer to that first and deepest of questions which the human heart can ask, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" We do not find it indeed in doctrine, or even in words at all. But we do find it in fact. We find it just in that mode of revelation which was best suited to the wants and capacities of those to whom it was addressed. Precisely as we ourselves first teach children by pictures, whose meaning, however, they cannot themselves fully understand, so God taught the childhood of the world. Not till the great act had itself been accomplished on Calvary could all its interpretation be given. First came the picture ; then, so to speak, the comment on the picture in the mouth of prophets and holy men of old ; then the great fact itself was exhibited ; and then from the hallowed lips of the Apostles of the Lord came the eloquent interpretation of the fact. It is one truth throughout. Christ Jesus came to do the Father's will, and to give his life a ransom for many ; by his obedience we are made righteous, He hath redeemed us by his blood—what are words like these but the filling in, so to speak, of the fainter lines of that ancient picture? *Peroone.*

At this point the wonderful story begins to burn inwardly with the fire of prophecy. It grows prophetic of the transcendent sacrifice on the cross because at its very core it was an inspiration of the same self-subduing love which inspired and glorified the offering of Golgotha. With perfect justice, therefore, has the Christian Church delighted since the beginning of her history to place the sacrifice of Isaac over against the mysterious and adorable sacrifice of her Lord, as its most splendid Old Testament prefiguration. What a man was found to do for God his Friend, no less, but more, God did to reconcile the world again unto himself. The will was not taken, as in Isaac's case, for the deed. No ram displaced the Son of God. Rather that substitution on Moriah of a symbolical animal in the room of human life, while it taught that no man could redeem himself or propitiate Heaven in heathen fashion by "giving the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul," did also contain an obscure hint that after all human life must bleed for human guilt. The representative blood of sheep or oxen could not be forever accepted instead of that better sacrifice for which it was substituted. Only by a willing and personal surrender of human life could man's covenant of peace with Heaven be finally sealed. That truth underlay the arrested sacrifice on Mount Moriah. When Jehovah set aside the offered Isaac, and with him set aside as unacceptable or inadequate the best and costliest expiation man could bring, did he not in some dim way pledge himself to lay upon the altar of his covenant a better and more prevailing Victim,—a Son of Man who should be also the Son of God? Is it possible that a vague anticipation of this future Victim, this better Isaac, one day to take Isaac's place as God's

provided Lamb, may have visited the seer at that exalted moment when on the mount Jehovah stood revealed as the "Provider"? Then, when the shadows of death had by Heaven's interposition been turned into a joy like the joy of resurrection, might Abraham see afar off the day of God's Messiah and be glad! *Dykes.*

**14.** When Isaac had asked, "where is the Lamb?" Abraham answered, *Elohim jireh*, "God will see," or "provide a lamb for himself." Now he perceives that he had uttered an unconscious prophecy, and that the God (Elohim) in whom he trusted had shown Himself indeed JEHOVAH, the Eternal Truth and the covenanted Saviour of his servants, and so he names the place JEHOVAH-jireh. E. H. B.

This was the obedience of faith! The wonderful illustration stands out before all the ages with God's seal of approbation broadly stamped upon it. When the trial had fully reached its culminating point and no room remained for doubt that Abraham would obey God at every cost, fearless of consequences, or rather committing all consequences to his God, then God's angel interposed! A ram was provided for the sacrifice and the son of promise went back to a more happy home with a more happy father, doubly blessed in the renewed approbation of his covenant-keeping God. No wonder that God proceeded then to make that covenant stronger and broader and richer than ever before! No wonder Abraham stamped into the very name of this ever-memorable locality one of the grand moral lessons of the scene—"Jehovah Jireh"—*In the mount of the Lord, himself will provide!* When you come to the mount of last and utmost emergency, the Lord will have salvation ready! His angel will appear; the ram of sacrifice will be there; and Isaac may go in peace! H. C.——Let it be recorded for generations to come, 1. That *the Lord will see;* he will always have his eye upon his people in their straits and distresses, that he may come in with seasonable succor in the critical juncture. 2. That he will *be seen* in the greatest perplexities of his people; he will not only *manifest* but *magnify* his wisdom, power, and goodness in their deliverance; where God *sees* and *provides*, he should be *seen* and *praised*. H.

If we follow the Lord's bidding, he will see to it that we shall not be ashamed or confounded. If we come into great need by following his command, he will see to it that the loss shall be recompensed. If our difficulties multiply and increase so that our way seems completely blocked up, Jehovah will see to it that the road shall be cleared. The Lord will see us through in the way of holiness if we are only willing to be thorough in it, and dare to follow whereso-ever he leads the way. We need not wonder that Abraham should utter this truth, and attach it to the spot which was to be forever famous: for his whole heart was saturated with it, and had been sustained by it. His trials had taught him more of God,—had given him a new name for his God; and this he would not have forgotten, but he would keep it before the minds of the generations following by naming the place Jehovah-jireh. True faith not only speaks the language of prophecy, but, *when she sees her prophecy fulfilled, faith is always delighted to raise memorials to the God of truth.* The stones which were set up of old were not to the memory of dead men, but they were memorials of the deeds of the living God: they abundantly uttered the memory of God's great goodness. Abraham on this occasion did not choose a name which recorded what *he* had done, but a name which spake of what *Jehovah* had done. Fall back on this eternal verity, that if God has provided his own Well-beloved Son to meet the most awful of all necessities, then he will provide for us in everything else. In the mount it shall be seen, in the place of the trial, in the heat of the furnace, in the last extremity Jehovah will be seen, for he will see to it, and it shall become a proverb with you,—"In the mount Jehovah shall be seen." That is to say, when you cannot see, the Lord will see you and see to your need; for his eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. You will not need to explain to God your difficulties and the intricacies of your position, he will see it all. And then his provision shall be seen. *Spurgeon.*

**15, 16.** It was when the quality of Abraham's faith had been verified by so unparalleled a strain that he was enriched by an appropriate reward. For reward is ever the divine answer to such virtue in man as can abide the tests of God. Once again, and for the last time, with accents of even higher solemnity than on any previous occasion, there came to Abraham, after this trial was past, the voice, now grown familiar, of his august Friend. It came to reiterate, in terms of unusual fulness, all the promises of His great covenant. It did something more. "Often before had God promised," says Augustine, "but never sworn." Now, for the first time, the divine Covenanter stooped to sustain human infirmity by the human expedient of "an oath for confirmation." "Willing more abundantly to show to this heir of prom-

ise the immutability of His counsel, God confirmed it by an oath." True to the ruling principle of condescension, this self-manifestation of the Deity assumed a form characteristically human. Men are accustomed to attest their word by an appeal to Him who is the greatest; he, because He could swear by no greater, sware by Himself The pledge that His word is true is His own existence. It was in recognition of the evidence which had just been afforded of His servant's stanch loyalty to the covenant, that the Eternal was pleased in this unexampled manner to reduplicate securities for His own faithfulness. Previous to this oath, Abraham had the word of God, and no more, on which to build his confidence. He trusted the All-truthful and Almighty to keep faith with His friend in His own way. For that very reason did a generous promiser vouchsafe to the man something more than a naked word. "To him that hath shall be given." "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only one, from Me, therefore by Myself have I sworn that in blessing I will bless thee." Thenceforth, as the New Testament explains, the believer possessed, not one, but "two immutable things" on which to rest. Through Abraham's obedience have we all obtained this "strong consolation." *Dykes.*

In his intercourse with the patriarchs God never sware by himself but in this one case. The uniqueness and importance of the oath appears from its being quoted afterward upon important occasions by Abraham himself, by Joseph, by Moses, by Zacharias, by Stephen, and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and frequently referred to by God himself. Its utterance was the last that fell from the lips of God upon the ear of Abraham. He lived for fifty years and more thereafter in peaceful, undisturbed repose. W. H.

God is pleased to make mention of Abraham's obedience as the consideration of the covenant; and he speaks of it with an encomium, *Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son;* he lays a strong emphasis upon that, and (v. 18) praises it as an act of obedience; in it thou hast *obeyed my voice*, and to obey is better than sacrifice. H.

**17.** In this and several other passages, the *gate* is emblematic of authority and dominion; as in Europe the delivery of the keys of a town is a formal act of submission to a conquering or superior power. We speak of the Turkish power as "the Porte," "the Sublime Porte," "the Ottoman Porte," from the principal gate or "porte" of the Turkish Sultan's palace at Constantinople. The mention of the gate involves the idea of the palace, and of the power which resides there. *Pict. Bible.*

**17, 18.** The same promise (chap. 12 : 3; 18 : 18), now repeated for the third time. Having been on the two first occasions spontaneously vouchsafed as a free gift, it is here the reward for Abraham's victorious faith and obedience. This being also the last of the revelations of God to Abraham of which Scripture makes mention, was designed as a strong consolation to him during the remainder of his earthly pilgrimage. Isaac, whom he had at first received from the grace of God in the natural way, he had now in a higher and spiritual way obtained afresh as a special child of grace and of promise, in recompense of his obedience. By works had his faith been made perfect (James 2 : 22). Abraham began with faith, and the longer his life flowed on in the exercise of it the more solid were the *evidences* which he was enabled to give of his faith, until that greatest *act* of it which he achieved upon Mount Moriah. Every new *trial* of faith successfully endured raises it to a higher degree of strength; and the *fruits* that it bears serve again for its nourishment. This affords the true reconciliation of the apparently contradictory statements of Paul and James, when the one says (Rom. 4 : 22), Abraham was justified by faith, and the other (James 2 : 21), Abraham was justified by works. C. G. B.

The blessings are too great, too broad, too far-reaching to admit any supposable interpretation short of the Messiah and the gospel age. In Christ and in him only can this prediction be fulfilled. And to crown all, our Lord himself testifies: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and *he saw it and was glad*" (Jno. 8 : 56). Not *me*, my person; but "my *day*"—the gospel age; the great events of it; the wonderful results of my coming—which is no doubt the exact truth. It was what was to be achieved by Christ in the way of blessings upon all the nations that Abraham prophetically saw. Paul adds his testimony that these words refer to Christ (Gal. 3 : 8): "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations ['heathen'] through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.'" "Preached before" is simply predicted, revealed by prophecy, with the accessory idea that the thing revealed was the gospel, the news of salvation. To show that in his view the burden and fulness of this prophecy are Christ and nothing less or other than Christ, he says in this connection (v. 16): "Now to Abraham and to his seed were the

promises made. He saith not—And to *seeds* as of many, but as of one—And to thy *seed*, which is Christ." H. C.

**19. So Abraham returned.** With what different feelings did Abraham now descend from Jehovah jireh! His Isaac lives, and yet his sacrifice is offered. He came to yield his dearest earthly delight at the call of God, and he goes away, not only accompanied by his son, whom he had virtually resigned, but enriched with new blessings and fresh promises! So true is it that God is ever better to his people than their fears, yea, than their hopes. No sacrifice was ever yet sincerely made for him but it finally redounded a hundred-fold to the gain and the consolation of the offerer. *Bush.*

This most exalted appearance of God to Abraham is the last recorded in the narrative. God spake and confirmed His last word, after Abraham had endured his last trial. He who possessed such faith can life-long walk in it, without any more seeing or hearing aught unusual. *Van O.*——Manifestly the trial and its issue marked the highest stage in all the leadings, trials, or triumphs in the life of Abraham, and the fullest manifestation of his faith. The remainder of his life passes quietly and undisturbed, till in a good old age he is gathered to his fathers. K.

*Suggestive Lessons.*

All the world's faith is not historic. To-day has its chronicles of trust and patience, and hope, quite as instructive and thrilling as those which are recorded in the Bible. It is too early to read them through, or to comprehend all their sad, yet glorious meaning; but every syllable is accepted and honored of God. J. P.

If men must have a reconciliation for all conflicting truths before they will believe any; if they must see how the promises of God are to be fulfilled before they will obey His commands; if duty is to hang suspended upon the satisfying of the understanding instead of the submission of the will,—then the greater number of us will find both the road of faith and the road of duty blocked at the outset. To us no more than to Abraham has the Most High vouchsafed such an explanation of His counsels as would make it possible to walk by intellectual sight, or dispense us from the task of walking by trust. *Dykes.*

The supreme lesson of this history is that Almighty God, in the just exercise of his sovereign and paternal authority, demands the complete subjugation of our will to his own. This is a hard lesson for man to learn. Man loves his own will. He clings to it long. It is just here that the great battle must be fought. We are not called upon to give up one pursuit out of many; one wish out of many; we are distinctly called upon to sink our will in God's; to sum up every prayer with "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." If God strip your vines, and take away the one ewe lamb; if he bark your fig tree, and cause the herd to die in the field—you are to say—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." And never can we say this with the heart's full consent until we are crucified with Christ. We must say our greatest lesson after him. He speaks first, we speak second. He is the Master, we are the scholars. Lord, if thou wilt break the last link, break it; "though thou slay me, I will trust in thee." J. P.

God's stern providence must step in to test the latent capabilities of the soul. No scrutiny of our own, however honest, will ascertain what is really in us. When he takes in hand to try us, because He loves us, it is that He may discover, not to Himself Who sees all hearts, but to us and to our brethren, that which His grace has planted deep within. Moreover, He designs by lending to our unfledged virtue scope, and a call to exercise itself, to train its strength of wing for bolder flights to follow. With safety, then, may it always be presumed, not only that the wise Lord Who guides earthly discipline tries men's virtue for their own profit, but also that He graduates such trials to the strength of virtue which is to be found in each. It concerns His faithfulness to "tempt," indeed, in this beneficent sense of the word, yet at the same time to provide that no servant of His be tempted "above that he is able." With a task so delicate, who could trust any hand less firm or skilful or tender than His own? It is the highest proof we possess of the exceptional nobleness which lived in Abraham, that on no other man of whom we read—save One—was ever imposed a test of trustful obedience so severe to abide, so far above the average power of human nature, so almost godlike in its demand, as this last and worst trial of Isaac's sacrifice. It was designed to reveal to posterity the fitness of this man for the unparalleled honor to which God had summoned him,—the honor of entering first into friendly alliance with Heaven of receiving in the name of the universal Church of all faithful souls Heaven's promise of eternal blessing, and of becoming to after ages the exemplar of that trust in God to which it has pleased Him to attach His favor

and forgiveness. The issue of that probation was to justify the confidence reposed in Abraham by Abraham's almighty Friend. *Dykes.*

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The patriarchal dispensation assumes a definite form in the Abrahamic covenant. God appeared to Abraham, and established the Church in his family. The covenant was substantially that Jehovah would be a God to Abraham and to his seed ; that in his seed all nations should be blessed : that circumcision should be the sign of the covenant, and that this sign should be administered to the child on the eighth day after his birth. This covenant became the basis of the Mosaic dispensation. The Church in the house of Abraham became a nation under Moses, but the nation was a hierarchy, a Church-State, in which God became at once civil and ecclesiastical ruler. In the fulness of time the Jewish dispensation gives place to the Christian ; but the Church is still the same, that is, the Abrahamic Church. Paul argues this point elaborately in the eleventh chapter of Romans, where he represents the Church under the figure of an olive-tree, from which the Jews have been broken off, and on to which the Gentile Christians have been grafted. The root and the trunk are still the same ; the identity of the tree, that is, of the Church, is completely preserved. But the Apostle in the third chapter of Galatians goes still further. He takes particular care to demonstrate that the repeal of the Mosaic law does not touch the covenant with Abraham ; that remains in all its original force. He says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many ; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Here, then, is an express declaration by the Apostle, not only that the Abrahamic Church still remains, but that the Abrahamic covenant has not been repealed, and *cannot be* repealed, and that this covenant was to find its highest, its prophetic fulfilment in Christ. *Nadal.*

### Successive Announcements of the Covenant.

1. In the outset of Abraham's history is that eventful *call* which brought him out from "Ur of the Chaldees," the narrative of which stands (Gen. 12 : 1–3). In the promise made to him then the leading points were—"I will make thy name great ;" "I will make of thee a great nation ;" "thou shalt be a blessing and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed ;" I will stand by thee to bless all who bless thee and to curse whosoever may curse thee. This must have raised in Abram's mind large expectations and assured him that Jehovah was indeed his own God.

2. Immediately after Abram's arrival in Canaan (Gen. 12 : 7) the Lord appeared to him specially to identify that as *the* land which he had promised (Gen. 12 : 1) to show him and to give to his posterity. There, as afterward in each new home, Abram built an altar and in devout worship called on the name of the Lord who had thus appeared to him.

3. Next, after his magnanimous bearing toward Lot (13 : 7–9, 14–18) in which he seemed ready to waive all claim to any territory Lot might choose to occupy, the Lord bade him lift up his eyes toward every point of the compass, and reiterated his grant of the whole—"All the land which thou seest to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever." Also, that his seed should be as the dust of the earth.

4. A yet richer scene of divine manifestation followed Abram's rescue of Lot from the plundering horde of the great Eastern kings (Gen. 15). The first words were significant and precious : "Fear not, Abram ; I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward." Those warlike kings might return any day with more military force than his household could muster. It was therefore at once timely and kind in the Lord to meet him at this point with this comforting assurance : "Fear not ; I am thy shield ;" I stand between thee and those vengeful foes. Moreover Abram had nobly refused to appropriate to his personal use even a shoe-latchet of the booty brought back from his routed enemies, whereupon the Lord said, "I will be thine exceeding great reward." On this reappearance the Lord promised him a son more distinctly than before, and posterity as the stars in number. Here it is said definitely—"Abraham believed God and God counted it to him for righteousness." His faith pleased God, and because of it, God accepted him and he stood as one who is "*all right* before God." Remarkably the Lord at this time identified himself to Abraham as the same God who had appeared to him in his fatherland and called him forth into Canaan and said, This is the very land I then promised to give thee ; to which Abraham replied (v. 8), "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" At once the Lord proceeded to ratify his covenant in the usual Oriental manner. A heifer, a she-goat and a ram—one from each species commonly used in sacrifice—are

brought forward ; each is cut into two parts ; the parts are laid asunder ; a turtle-dove and a young pigeon, also used for sacrifice in certain contingencies, were added but not cut in two. Then when night came on, a deep sleep fell upon Abraham, and the Lord gave him in vision certain prophetic views of his posterity ; and ratified the covenant by passing (in the symbol of fire and smoke) between the severed parts of the sacrificial animals.

5. At the next eventful appearance (Gen. 17) Abraham had been waiting in faith for the son of promise a quarter of a century, and was perhaps tempted to think the fulfilment fast becoming impossible. Pertinently therefore the first words of the Lord were—"*I am the Almighty God!* Walk before me and be thou perfect ;" fear nothing ; my covenant stands fast. I will multiply thee exceedingly ! Abraham fell on his face and God talked with him, reiterating his promise of posterity, giving unwonted prominence to the family feature of his covenant—"a God to thee and to thy seed after thee"—and instituting the rite of circumcision.

6. The sixth and last recorded appearance followed the triumph of Abraham's faith in the sacrifice of his only son. In this the Lord reaffirmed the great elements of his promise—posterity as the stars of heaven ; triumphant over their enemies ; a blessing to all the nations of the earth. Thus at successive and somewhat remote intervals and mostly on special occasions the Lord manifested himself to his servant to confirm his faith, to enlarge the range of promise and to signify his pleasure in the obedient trustful life of his friend.

One other special feature in the great covenant with Abraham should be noticed. In many respects this covenant made Abraham and his posterity a peculiar people, discriminating broadly between them and every other nation, and accumulating the blessings of God upon them in no stinted measure. But the Lord put into this covenant one counteracting element of great power: *He ordained them to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth.* Into this great system which made them his peculiar people, openly and clearly he put the germinal idea of a salvation to be provided for the wide world. This covenant people were to be the almoners of all these blessings to the otherwise benighted and perishing nations. At the very least here was opened a thoroughly rich field for prayer, the broadest scope for real sympathy with the benevolence of the Great Father of all the nations and a powerful antidote against the narrow exclusiveness which might otherwise have shrunk and shrivelled their piety and narrowed their aspirations to themselves and their land. How often in the heart of the good men of later times—the men like Moses, Samuel, David. Isaiah,—must the kindling thought have been sprung by this great germinal promise—*When shall these things be?* H. C.

## Section 51.

### DEATH AND BURIAL OF SARAH.

GENESIS 23 : 1-20.

1 AND the life of Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years : these were the years of
2 the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), in the land of
3 Canaan : and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham rose
4 up from before his dead, and spake unto the children of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a
sojourner with you ; give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead
5 out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us,
6 my lord : thou art a mighty prince among us : in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead ;
7 none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. And
Abraham rose up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.
8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of
9 my sight, hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the
cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field ; for the full price let him

10 give it to me in the midst of you for a possession of a buryingplace. Now Ephron was sitting
in the midst of the children of Heth : and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audi-
11 ence of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying Nay, my
lord, hear me : the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee ; in the
12 presence of the sons of my people give I it thee : bury thy dead. And Abraham bowed him-
13 self down before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the
people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt, I pray thee, hear me : I will give the price of the
14 field ; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying
15 unto him, My lord, hearken unto me : a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver,
16 what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto
Ephron ; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of
17 the children of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant. So
the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the
cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border
18 thereof round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the
19 children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. And after this, Abraham
buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre (the same is Hebron),
20 in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abra-
ham for a possession of a buryingplace by the children of Heth.

The following table exhibits the leading incidents in the life of Abraham, and his age at the time when that is either specified in the record or can be fixed :—

| *Age.* | *Incident.* | *Record.* |
|---|---|---|
| 70 (?) | Call from God at Ur..... | |
| 75. | Call repeated at Haran ..... | 12 : 1–4. |
| | Migration to Canaan..... | 12 : 4, 5. |
| | Halt at Sichem—Third Divine manifestation at Bethel.... | 12 : 6, 7. |
| | Journey to Egypt. ..... | 12 : 10–20. |
| | Return to Bethel—Separation from Lot..... | 13 : 1–13. |
| | Fourth Divine manifestation. | 13 : 14–17. |
| 80 (?) | Settlement at Mamre (Hebron).. ..... | 13 : 18. |
| | Rout of the invaders..... | 14 : 1–16. |
| | Interview with Melchizedek . | 14 : 17–24. |
| | Fifth Divine manifestation—Covenant of faith..... | 15 ; |
| 85. | Flight of Hagar..... | 16 : 1–14. |
| 86. | Birth of Ishmael ..... | 16 : 15, 16. |
| 99. | Sixth Divine manifestation—Covenant of circumcision.. | 17 : |
| | Seventh Divine manifestation—The three angels..... | 18 : 1–14. |
| | Sodom and Gomorrah—Abraham's intercession..... | 18 : 16–33. |
| | Destruction of the Cities of the Plain..... ..... | 19 : |
| | Sojourn at Gerar..... | 20 : |
| 100. | Birth of Isaac..... | 21 : 1–5. |
| | Casting out of Ishmael—Eighth Divine manifestation..... | 21 : 8–21. |
| | The compact with Abimelech—Beersheba..... | 21 : 22–34. |
| 125 (?) | The great temptation—Mount Moriah ..... ..... | 22 : 1–14. |
| | Ninth Divine manifestation—The oath and the blessing..... ..... ... | 22 : 15–18. |
| 137. | Death and burial of Sarah... | 23 : 1, 2. |
| | The cave of Machpelah ..... | 23 : 3–20. |
| 140. | Mission for Rebekah—Marriage of Isaac.... ..... | 24 : |
| | Marriage with Keturah—its issue..... | 25 : 1–4. |
| 175. | Death and burial of Abraham..... ..... | 25 : 7–9. |

W. H.

**23.** This chapter is interesting as containing the first record of mourning for the dead, of burial, of property in land, of purchase of land, of silver as a medium of purchase, and of a standard of weight. Mourning for the dead was, no doubt, natural on the first death. Burial was a matter of necessity, in order, as Abraham says, to remove the body out of sight. Property in land was introduced where tribes became settled, formed towns, and began to practise tillage. Barter was the early mode of accommodating each party with the articles he needed or valued. This led gradually to the use of the precious metals as a "current" medium of exchange—first by weight, and then by coins of a fixed weight and known stamp. M.

The next event recorded in Abraham's life is the *death of Sarah,* at the age of 127, at Hebron ; so that Abraham must have returned from Beersheba to his old home. P. S.——We are informed in Num. 13 : 22, that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan, or Tanis, the ancient

capital of Lower Egypt. At the conquest of Palestine Hebron was taken by Caleb, whose possession it became, being in the allotment of the tribe of Judah. It was afterward assigned to the Levites, and became a city of refuge. David kept his court there in the first seven years of his reign, before Jerusalem was taken. During the Babylonish captivity, the Edomites appropriated Hebron when they invaded the south of Judah, and it became the capital of a district which continued to be called Idumæa long after the territory of the Edomites had been incorporated with Judea. It is situated about 27 miles south of Jerusalem, eastward of a chain of hills which intersects the country from north to south. It stands on the slope of an eminence, at the summit of which are some misshapen ruins of an ancient castle. *Bush.* ——Although the valleys opening on the northwest of the town might not altogether inappropriately be termed plains, the whole region is greatly elevated, and Hebron itself, two thousand eight hundred feet above the Mediterranean, or four thousand one hundred above the Dead Sea, is the highest town in Palestine. Those who approach it from the southern deserts encounter more or less of fatiguing ascent for fifty miles, while those who come from Jerusalem find that they are making their way slowly upward over innumerable ridges and valleys to a height of six hundred feet above the sacred city. Once in Scripture its elevated position is referred to—in the expression, "Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron, in the *mountain* of Judah" (Josh. 20 : 7). Sometimes the patriarch sojourned in the country to the south and southwest of Hebron, bordering the Philistines' land, especially in the neighborhood of Beersheba, 25 miles distant ; yet Hebron ever had for him a superior attraction. Here he was living when his wife Sarah died, and here he purchased the only ground he seems ever to have owned—the burial field of Machpelah—where, in time, his sons Isaac and Ishmael met to lay his body beside that of his wife, and where, in turn, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah, found their last earthly resting-place. N. C. B. [See p. 312.]

**1. And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old.** Sarah is the only woman in the sacred writings, whose *age*, *death*, and *burial*, are distinctly noted. And she has been deemed worthy of *higher* honor ; for Paul (Gal. 4 : 22, 23) makes her a type of the *church of Christ ;* and her faith in the accomplishment of God's promise that she should have a son, when all natural probabilities were against it, is particularly celebrated in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. 11 : 11). Sarah was about ninety-one years old when Isaac was born, and she lived thirty-six years after and saw him grown up to man's estate With SARAH the promise of the incarnation of Christ *commenced*, though a comparatively obscure prophecy of it had been delivered to Eve, and with MARY it terminated, having had its exact completion. Thus God put more honor upon those two women than upon all the daughters of Eve besides. A. C.

There were many excellencies in the character of this remarkable woman. As a wife, she was loving, faithful, and deferential, a type of conjugal reverence (1 Pet. 3 : 6) – characteristics mentioned frequently with special approval in the Word of God ; as a mother, most tender and thoughtful in respect to all things pertaining to the real interest of her only child. Though not an "ideal type of excellence," her excellencies outshone her defects, and she stands before us as "truly feminine" in both the one and the other. *Hughes.*

Sarah dies when Isaac is thirty seven. We know something about what she was as a wife to Abraham, but little of what she was as a mother to Isaac, and about as little of what he was as a son to her. In the passage which records her death and burial he is never mentioned. His figure is lost in the shadow of that stately form of Abraham, bowed down with sorrow, doing the last honors to the dead. That Isaac fully shared his father's grief—that the tie between mother and son was tender and strong—is clear from the fact that it took three years and Rebekah besides to comfort him after his mother's death. W. H.

**2.** Abraham mourned for Sarah. Consecration to God's purposes does not eradicate our deep human love ; rather it heightens, refines, sanctifies it ! Every father is more a father in proportion as he loves and serves the great Father in heaven. We should be on our guard against any system of religion or philosophy that seeks to cool the fervor of natural and lawful love. It may be very majestic not to shed tears ; but it is most inhuman, most ungodly. Christianity educates our humanity, not deadens it ; and when we are in tears it helps us to see through them nearly into heaven. J. P.

The friendship of the Eternal One was a poor boon, comparatively, unless it survived this life. The blessing promised in that solemn covenant was surely too vast to be exhausted here. Nay, the man who had sacrificed home and friends for God might deem himself "of all men most miserable," if no "abiding city" was

to reward his hopes hereafter. His consciousness that the Everlasting Undying One was become his Shield and exceeding great Reward, could not fail to wrap within it a trust in immortality, undeveloped, it may be, and dim, yet real and not to be shaken. Of such a man it was more literally true than even of others that he "died in faith." The promises he had "embraced" were promises he had "not received." He saw them only afar off. Through death he had to go to meet them. Perhaps at no hour of his life were such questionings of a life beyond, or a keen sense of the transitoriness of his sojourn here, more likely to be forced upon the mind of Abraham than when he sat a broken-hearted widower beside his dead. *Dykes.*

**4.** The tenderness of grief, the sacredness of death, the dignity of faith, the courtesy of sympathy, the nicety of honor, the liberality of love, the consecration of faith and hope,—these all are pictured here with a simplicity like Homer's, but which surpasses any poetry in speaking directly to the heart. It is the universal elegy of human grief, "Give me a *possession*, a secure and sacred spot, where I may bury my dead." J. P. T.——The patriarch's resolution to acquire by purchase, and not otherwise, an hereditary place of sepulture, with the importance evidently attached to its acquisition, can only be understood in the light of his peculiar relations to the land of Canaan. Heir as he was by divine promise of the whole land, recognized by its citizens as a "prince of God," this man had lived in it for over sixty years without owning one yard of soil. He had acquired no fixed property. Home he had none but a shifting tent. But must this apply to him dead as well as living? Sarah's decease raised this question, and the devout instinct of her husband felt its way to the true answer. An exile through life, he will claim the land as his own in death; his own, not to enjoy it for himself, but to hold it in pledge for his seed, to whom it has been guaranteed of God. Men's graves are the heritage of their posterity. *Dykes.*

**3–18.** Abraham wished to make his possession of this cave of Machpelah secure to his posterity. The only way in which he can do this is by a public act and deed in the presence of many witnesses. It was the custom of the times, as it is the custom of Easterns still, to employ mediators in every transaction of this kind. W. H.——Then ensues the conference in the gate,—the Oriental place of assembly, where the negotiators and the witnesses of the transaction, as at the present day, are gathered from the many comers and goers through "the gate of the city." The Hittite inhabitants offer him the most sacred of their sepulchres for the cherished remains. The Patriarch maintains his determination to remain aloof from the Canaanite population, at the same time that he preserves every form of courtesy and friendliness, in accordance with the magnificent toleration and inborn gentleness which pervade his character. A. P. S.——Ephron offers the field as a free gift—too generous an offer, whose acceptance might in the end be more costly, and would be less secure. Firm to his purpose, yet never failing in his courtesy, Abraham first bows again to the assembled citizens, and then turning to Ephron, insists on purchasing. In true Oriental fashion the son of Zohar says: "The land is worth four hundred shekels; what is that betwixt me and thee?"—above, perhaps, the real value, but Abraham has gained his point. The price is specified. He has come prepared; the silver is weighed out on the spot, "current money with the merchant." The purchase is completed and ratified by a description of the property, such as you might find in any deed of conveyance still. "And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, and the cave that was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure." In manner so picturesque was the first commercial transaction that we have any record of, carried out; and so was purchased the oldest family burying-ground that any land can show; its history in patriarchal times, its story down to our own days, rendering it the most interesting tomb in all the earth. W. H.

**10. Of all that went in at the gate of his city.** That is, of all the citizens or inhabitants. *Kidder.*——The gates of cities in these days, and many ages after, were the places of judicature and common resort. Here the governors and elders of the city met to hear complaints, administer justice, make conveyances of titles and estates, and, in short, to transact all the affairs of the place. Hence that passage in the Psalmist, "They shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate;" that is, when they are accused by them before the court of magistrates. It is probable that the room or hall where these magistrates sat was over the gate, because Boaz is said to "go up to the gate;" and the reason of having it built there seems to have been for the convenience of the inhabitants; who, being all husbandmen, and forced to pass and repass every morning and evening as they went and came from their

labor, might be more easily called as they went by, whenever they were wanted to appear in any business. So that from the whole it appears, that Abraham could not have made his purchase from Ephron, without his having recourse to the city gates. *Stackhouse.*——All affairs of moment among the Algerines are laid before the Dey, or the principal officers, who sit constantly in the gate of the palace for that purpose. Thus we read of the "elders in the gate" (De. 22 : 15) and of "him that reproveth and rebuketh in the gate" (Is. 29 : 21). The Ottoman Court likewise seems to be called the *Porte*, from the distribution of justice and the dispatch of public business carried on in the gates of it. *Dr. Shaw.*

**15, 16.** The business-like method of Abraham in his traffic conforms to the careful reckonings so abundant in Egypt, and to the existence of a hundred Chaldean tablets filled with business contracts, before and after the time of Abraham. S. C. B.——Abraham pays the money : he pays it readily, without hesitation ; pays it in full, without diminution ; and pays it by weight, current money with the merchant, without deceit. See how anciently money was used for the help of commerce ; and see how honestly money should be paid where it is due. Though all the land of Canaan was Abraham's by promise, yet the time of his possessing being not come, what he had now occasion for, he bought and paid for. H.

**17–20.** The one spot of earth which Abraham could call his own, the pledge which he left of the perpetuity of his interest in "the land wherein he was a stranger," was the sepulchre which he bought with four hundred shekels of silver from Ephron the Hittite. It was a rock with a double cave ("Machpelah"), standing amid a grove of olives or ilexes, on the slope of the table-land where the first encampment had been made. Round this venerable cave the reverence of successive ages and religions has now raised a series of edifices which, while they preserve its identity, conceal it entirely from view. But there it still remains. Within the Mussulman mosque, within the Christian church, within the massive stone enclosure built by the Kings of Judah, is, beyond any reasonable question, the last resting-place of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah ; "and there Jacob buried Leah ;" and thither, with all the pomp of funeral state, his own embalmed body was brought from the palaces of Egypt. Of all the great Patriarchal family, Rachel alone is absent. A. P. S.

No ancient site in Palestine is more satisfactorily identified than this by historic landmarks and credible uninterrupted traditions. Jews, Christians, and Moslems, alike venerate the place ; but with extremest jealousy the Moslem possessors guard the entrance, even of the outer enclosure, against the foot of any except the true believer. By means of skilful diplomacy, entrance was a few years since obtained for the Prince of Wales, on his tour through Palestine, with a few attendants ; yet these were not permitted to descend to the cave below the mosque --the real burial-place—but were obliged to content themselves with a sight of the cenotaphs of the patriarchs, which are placed on the main floor of the mosque. N. C. B.——The wall which encloses the *Haram* (or sacred precinct in which the sepulchres themselves are reported, and probably with truth, still to lie) is a monument certainly equal, and probably superior in age to anything remaining in Palestine. It is a quadrangular building of about 200 feet in length by 115 feet in width, its dark gray walls rising fifty or sixty in height, without window or opening of any description, except two small entrances at the S. E. and S. W. corners. It is surrounded by a colonnade of forty-eight square pilasters. It stands nearly on the crest of the hill which forms the eastern side of the valley on the slopes and bottom of which the town is strewn. *Dic. B.*

Abraham designed *to perpetuate among his posterity the expectation of the promised land.* It was the most likely means of keeping alive in every succeeding generation the hope of ultimately possessing the whole land. Accordingly we find it did produce this very effect ; for as Abraham and Sarah were buried in that cave, so were Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah, notwithstanding Jacob died in Egypt. And Joseph also, though buried in Egypt, gave commandment that when the Israelites should depart out of the land of Egypt to possess the land of Canaan, they should carry up his bones with them, and bury them in the sepulchre of his progenitors. *Bush.*

It is this consideration which ever after made that venerable cave at Machpelah precious and even sacred in the eyes of later generations of Jews. By means of it, Israel virtually retained a lawful hold upon the land of promise throughout those six centuries which were still to roll away before Joshua led the tribes into possession. The pompous funeral procession which bore the embalmed remains of Jacob back from Egypt, that they might be laid beside his father and his grandfather, testified to the depth of this feeling on the part of his exiled children.

Like the instructions which Joseph left concerning his bones, it showed that the sons of Abraham clung to a grave in Canaan as a pledge that the land itself was to be one day their own. Machpelah has thus become a signal figure of the claim which the spiritual Church of God asserts upon the earth we dwell in. One day the globe itself, purified from evil, is destined to become the enduring inheritance and home of all the saints. For the present, however, Christ's people hold it only as Israel in its exile held Canaan, by their graves. One empty grave near Jerusalem, with countless more, which in their turn are likewise to be emptied,—these are the sole possessions in virtue of which just men departed can still call the earth their own. These are the pledges of its future possession. Their hope rests, like Abraham's, on God's word alone. Its fulfilment lies as far off, perchance, as his. It is not less invisible, save to far-sighted faith. *Dykes.*

## Section 52.

### REBEKAH'S PARENTAGE. SOUGHT AND BROUGHT TO ISAAC.

GENESIS 22 : 20–24 ; 24 : 1–67.

22 : 20 AND it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Mil-
21 cah, she also hath borne children unto thy brother Nahor ; Uz his firstborn, and Buz his
22 brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram ; and Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jid-
23 laph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begat Rebekah : these eight did Milcah bear to Nahor,
24 Abraham's brother. And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she also bare Tebah, and Gaham, and Tahash, and Maacah.

24 : 1 And Abraham was old, *and* well stricken in age : and the LORD had blessed Abraham
2 in all things And Abraham said unto his servant, the elder of his house, that ruled
3 over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh : and I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take
4 a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell : but thou
5 shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac. And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land : must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?
6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.
7 The LORD, the God of heaven, that took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and that spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land ; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my
8 son from thence. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear
9 from this my oath ; only thou shalt not bring my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning this matter.
10 And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed ; having all goodly things of his master's in his hand : and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto
11 the city of Nahor. And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by the well
12 of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray thee, good speed this day,
13 and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand by the fountain of water ;
14 and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water : and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink ; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also : let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac ; and thereby shall I know that thou hast
15 shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of
16 Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her : and she went down to
17 the fountain, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and

said, Give me to drink, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord : and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.
And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels. And the man looked stedfastly on her ; holding his peace, to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold ; and said, Whose daughter art thou ? tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in ? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed his head, and worshipped the LORD. And he said, Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who hath not forsaken his mercy and his truth toward my master : as for me, the LORD hath led me in the way to the house of my master's brethren. And the damsel ran, and told her mother's house according to these words. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban : and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the fountain. And it came to pass, when he saw the ring, and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me ; that he came unto the man ; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the fountain. And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD ; wherefore standest thou without ? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. And the man came into the house, and he ungirded the camels ; and he gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the men's feet that were with him. And there was set meat before him to eat : but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly ; and he is become great : and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and menservants and maidservants, and camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old : and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell : but thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way ; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house : then shalt thou be clear from my oath, when thou comest to my kindred ; and if they give her not to thee, thou shalt be clear from my oath. And I came this day unto the fountain, and said, O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go : behold, I stand by the fountain of water ; and let it come to pass, that the maiden which cometh forth to draw, to whom I shall say, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink ; and she shall say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels : let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed for my master's son. And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder ; and she went down unto the fountain, and drew : and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also : so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou ? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him : and I put the ring upon her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter for his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me : and if not, tell me : that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD : we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto the LORD. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah : he gave also to her

54 brother and to her mother precious things. And they did eat and drink, he and the men
that were with him, and tarried all night ; and they rose up in the morning, and he said,
55 Send me away unto my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel
56 abide with us *a few* days, at the least ten ; after that she shall go. And he said unto
them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way ; send me away that I may
57 go to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.
58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she
59 said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's
60 servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Our sister, be thou
*the mother* of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which
61 hate them. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and
62 followed the man : and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came
63 from the way of Beer-lahai-roi ; for he dwelt in the land of the South. And Isaac went
out to meditate in the field at the eventide : and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, be-
64 hold, there were camels coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw
65 Isaac, she lighted off the camel. And she said unto the servant, What man is this that
walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, It is my master : and she took her
66 veil, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.
67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became
his wife ; and he loved her : and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

It is characteristic of the Bible, that while it never loses sight of its one great interest, which is the development of revealed religion, as little does it divorce religion from the ordinary events of human history. Wherever God has entered into friendly contact with mankind, whether under the old covenant or the new, there He has hallowed with His touch everything human. Nothing that affects the life of man lies outside. As the sacred record stretches itself along the course of what we call secular history, it counts nothing in it to be common or unclean. Births, weddings and funerals in the family ; politics, legislation, wars, in the state ; the origin, migration, or decline of races—all are absorbed into a narrative which has for its aim the spiritual education of the race. How a grave was bought for dead Sarah is told as minutely as how Abraham sacrificed his son. The courtship of Isaac's wife fills a greater number of verses than the ratification of Jehovah's covenant. *Dykes.*——A whole chapter—one of the longest chapters too in the Pentateuch—is devoted entirely to a minute detail of all the circumstances of Isaac's marriage, while two great revolutions of the world—the rise and the overthrow of secular kingdoms—are passed by in silence. But it is important to illustrate the operations of God's grace, to show the workings out of His Providence in the most ordinary affairs of human life, and above all to exhibit the minute care with which provision is made for accomplishing in due time the great scheme of redemption. And therefore it is that we have this detailed account. S. R.

The narrative of the bridal embassy and its results offers to the eye one of the minutest, liveliest, most varied pictures of Oriental manners and customs in that primitive patriarchal time. The large outfit for the journey—ten camels, and "all the best belonging to his master in his hand ;" the evening meeting by the well-side outside the city ; the coming forth of Rebekah, pitcher on shoulder ; her emptying the water into the trough to give the camels to drink ; the costly nose-ring and bracelets given ; the reception by Laban ; the ungirding of the camels, and the bringing them into the house ; the water for Eliezer's feet-washing, and the "men's feet that were with him ;" the jewels and raiment for the bride ; the rich presents for her relatives ; the meeting with Isaac on return ; the lighting off the camel ; the putting on the veil—so unchangeable are Eastern manners, that there is not a single one of all these incidents to which an exact parallel has not been produced in the customs of the Bedouin of our own day. But there is one feature—the most marked of all in the narrative—to which no such parallel can be produced—the common faith of master and servant in the overruling providence of God. W. H.——Full of such touches of nature as speak to men's hearts in every age, this narrative breathes none the less the peculiar innocence and simple grace of primitive and pastoral life. For the first time since the sinless loves of Eden were blasted, it shows us wedlock receiving a fresh consecration from His hand Who had once more become the Friend of man. Within the shelter of God's covenant love grows pure again, and puts on a symbolic, almost sacramental character. The

wooing of Rebekah and her betrothal to Isaac are the earliest in a happy series of Bible passages devoted to the elevation of the marriage bond ; a series which includes the romantic service of Jacob, the espousals of Ruth, the fidelity of the tempted Bride in the Canticles, and the wedding feast at Cana. *Dykes.*

The choice of a wife for Isaac was no casual incident ; it was not something standing apart from the main line of his history, and something therefore which might be left to Isaac's unassisted thought and arrangement ; it stood as a part of a promise ; it was a clause in a solemn covenant ; it was as sacred as prayer, and as joyous as a morning psalm. Why should we diminish our own sense of God's care in our life, by always regarding the patriarchal history as something never to be repeated, without counterpart in our life ? God is *our* Father ; our life is precious in his eyes ; our family and everything about us is dear to him. J. P.

**22 : 20. It was told Abraham.** The chief intention of this genealogy seems to be, to give us an account of the family of Rebekah, whom Isaac married : it connects with the beginning of ch. 24. And it was in consequence of the information here given to Abraham, that he thought of seeking a wife for his son from this family. Huz, or Uz, here mentioned, is supposed to have given its name to Job's country (see Job 1 : 1), and from Buz it is thought came Elihu, the Buzite. *Locke.*

**22 : 20-24.** This family notice is inserted as a piece of contemporaneous history, to explain and prepare the way for the marriage of Isaac. *Milcah, she also,* in allusion to Sarah, who has borne Isaac. So far as we know, they may have been sisters, but they were at all events sisters-in-law. The only new persons belonging to our history are Bethuel and Rebekah. Uz, Aram, and Kesed are interesting, as they show that we are in the region of the Shemites, among whom these are ancestral names (Gen. 10 : 23 ; 11 : 28). Buz may have been the ancestor of Elihu (Job 32 : 2). Maakah may have given rise to the tribes and land of Maakah (Deut. 3 : 14 ; 2 Sam. 10 : 6). The other names do not again occur. *And his concubine.* A concubine was a secondary wife, whose position was not considered disreputable in the East. Nahor, like Ishmael, had twelve sons, —eight by his wife, and four by his concubine. M.

**24 : 2, 3. The elder of his house.** That is, his chief servant, the head of his household, who had the direction of all his affairs, as stated in the following clause, " who ruled over all that he had." Compare, in ch. 50 : 7, " the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house ;" that is, the high officers of his household who were at the head of its several departments. Men of mature age and experience were required in these offices, and hence they are called *elders ;* and this became a title of official rank and dignity. It is commonly supposed, though without any special ground for the opinion, that this confidential servant was the Eliezer spoken of in ch. 15 : 2. *Put thy hand under my thigh ;* as a pledge of fidelity to the required promise. Among many ancient nations a peculiar sacredness was attached to this act, and to a promise confirmed by it. To this formal pledge was sometimes added an oath, as in this case and in the one recorded in ch. 47 : 29-31. T. J. C.

**2-9.** Already Isaac was verging on the age of forty ; yet he does not appear of his own accord to have contemplated marriage or taken any steps toward it. For Isaac's own sake, it was time to rouse him from his grief by a fresh interest, and fill up the blank over which he was disposed to brood. The arrangements which Abraham made with this view were determined by two ruling considerations, which may be traced through his whole conduct. On the one hand, there was his settled decision not to mingle the pure blood of his chosen and covenanted family with any of the heathen races around. The posture of religious separation which God had assigned to him made this nothing less than a sacred duty. On the other hand, Abraham was not less resolute to hinder at every cost his son's return from Canaan to the settlements of his kindred beyond the Euphrates. The same divine command which had made himself an exile, he conceived to bind his offspring. This Canaan had been promised to his seed for their inheritance ; and in Canaan, therefore, his seed should stay. *Dykes.*——In sending this wise and faithful servant to seek and to choose a wife for Isaac and in his strong injunction not to permit Isaac to go even among his own kindred, Abraham evinced a clear insight of Isaac's natural weakness. Isaac was poorly fitted to cope with Laban, as Jacob afterward did. B.

In this transaction Abraham exhibits points of character worthy of imitation by his faithful children in every age. First—his unworldliness ; for there is no taint of merely worldly policy in his arrangements, though obviously he had the strongest temptations. From what we have seen of the respect in which he was held, he could doubtless have formed the most

distinguished connection for his son. He was "a mighty prince." Second—his firm reliance in Divine Providence when confessedly in a dilemma. He does not see how his end is to be accomplished. But a covenant God, he feels assured, "will send his angel before his servant." O that there were more of this simple and explicit trust in Providence, and less of undertaking by fathers and mothers to work for Providence, in this delicate and important matter of the settlement of children. S. R.

**7. He shall send his angel before thee.** Here is the expression of a firm, unshaken confidence in the prosperous issue of the expedition. He had been prompted by the most sincere regard to the will of God in having it undertaken, and he could not but infer from all that had been before done for him, and said to him, that He would put the seal of his approbation upon the step proposed. *Bush.* ——Abraham was persuaded God would send His angel to bring the affair to a happy issue. And when we seem drifting toward some great upturning of our life, or when things seem to come all of a sudden and in crowds upon us, so that we cannot judge what we should do, it is an animating thought that another eye than ours is penetrating the darkness, finding for us a way through all entanglement and making crooked things straight for us. *Dods.*

**10. Took ten camels—having all goodly things.** The preparation for the journey is very stately. But it is an embassy from a prince. And doubtless the wealth that he carried with him was intended to satisfy the bride's family that she would be well provided for. While we rely on Providence, we are still to use all ordinary means, instead of expecting God to work miracles for us. S. R.—— To expect the accomplishment of any good end, without a proper use of the means, is the most reprehensible enthusiasm ; and to suppose that any good can be done or procured without the blessing of God, merely because proper means are used, is not less reprehensible. A. C.

**To Mesopotamia.** Lit. "Aram of the two rivers," or "Aram-Naharaim." Aram-Naharaim was the whole region afterward called Mesopotamia, lying between the two rivers : Padan-Aram being a limited portion of this country of flat character in the neighborhood of Haran. *The city of Nahor, i.e* Haran or Charran. E. H. B.

**11. Without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water.** A modern guide-book could hardly furnish a truer picture of what occurs at the close of every day in the vicinity of eastern villages, than this description written so many thousand years ago. The wells exist almost universally just out of the town ; those who draw water are women ; they carry their pitchers upon their heads or shoulders ; and often have to go down a flight of steps in order to reach the water. How vividly depicted in my mind are the scenes embodying these traits of oriental life, which I associate with Yebna, Ramlah, Beitin, Nazareth, Kana, and many other places still ! *Hackett.*

At every step on the way to Harran, which now lies as it did of old at about six hours' march from Oorfa, the hills on the right hand and on the left of the plain recede further and further, until you find yourself fairly launched on the desert ocean ; a boundless plain, strewed at times with patches of the brightest flowers, at other times with rich and green pastures, covered with flocks of sheep and goats feeding together ; here and there a few camels, and the son or daughter of their owner tending them. The ruins of the castle surmounting a mound makes Harran a landmark plainly visible from every part of the plain. That same day I walked at even to the well I had passed in the afternoon, coming from Oorfa ; the well of this, the city of Nahor, "at the time of the evening—the time when women go out to draw water." There was a group of them filling, no longer their pitchers, since the steps down which Rebekah went to fetch the water are now blocked up, but filling their waterskins, by drawing water at the well's mouth. Everything around that well bears signs of age and of the wear of time ; for as it is the only well of drinkable water there, it is much resorted to. Other wells are only for watering the flocks. There we find the troughs of various height, for camels, for sheep and for goats, for kids and for lambs ; there the women wear nose-rings, and bracelets on their arms, some of gold or of silver, and others of brass, or even of glass. One of these was seen in the distance bringing to water her flock of fine patriarchal sheep ; ere she reached the well, shepherds had filled the troughs with water for her sheep. She was the Sheik's daughter, the "beautiful and well-favored" Sadheefeh. As the shadows of the grass and of the low shrubs around the well lengthened and grew dim, and the sun sank below the horizon, the women left in small groups ; the shepherds followed them, and I was left alone in this vast solitude. *Malan.*

Another half century, or it may be far less time, will in all likelihood witness extensive

changes in Bible lands. But nothing can now deprive us of that ample fund of Bible illustration which has been gathered up almost within living memory. *Dykes.*

**He made the camels to kneel.** A mode of expression taken from actual life. The action is literally *kneeling ;* and this the camel is taught to do from his youth. The *place* is said to have been by a well of water, and this well was outside the city. In the East, where wells are scarce and water indispensable, the existence of a well or fountain determines the site of the village. The people build near it, but prefer to have it outside the "city," to avoid the noise, dust, and confusion always occurring at it, and especially if the place is on the public highway. It is around the fountain that the thirsty traveller and the wearied caravan assemble ; and if you have become separated from your own company before arriving at a town, you need only inquire for the fountain, and there you will find them. It was perfectly natural, therefore, for Eliezer to *halt at the well.* The *time* was evening ; but it is further stated that it was when the *women* go forth to draw water. True to life again. About great cities men often carry water, but in the country *women only* go to the well or the fountain ; and often have I seen long files of them going and returning with their pitchers, "at the time when women go out to draw water." This Biblical narrative is so natural to one familiar with the East, so beautiful also, and life-like, that the entire scene seems to be an affair in which he has himself been but recently an actor. *W. M. Thompson.*

The well or cistern is for the females what the gate is for the men : here they indulge in friendly conversation and exchange their news ; here they are for a short interval released from much of their oriental restraint : and since shepherds also repair hither to water their flocks and herds, it serves in many cases as a convenient place for meetings and appointments, and may in others be the scene of strife, where old feuds and enmities are brought to an issue. Cisterns were generally closed by a large heavy stone, which was removed by the united strength of the shepherds, while excavated wells were made more easily accessible, by steps leading down to them. The place where the following event happened seems to have belonged to the latter description. *Kalisch.*

**12-14.** Abraham's devout heart had confidence enough in Jehovah to feel sure that an event so unlikely would in God's own way be brought to pass, since he was convinced that the covenant and purposes of Jehovah required it. The strong faith of the master impressed itself also upon his faithful slave. Devotion to his master's interests, joined to a simple and childlike piety, formed the characteristic of this man, to whom was intrusted the delicate and responsible task of negotiating a marriage alliance for the heir. *Dykes.*——He speaks all along under a full persuasion that the providence of God extended to the minutest events, and that there was no presumption in appealing to him on the present occasion. His words are full of confidence that God would direct him in the matter. He addresses him as *Jehovah* the *covenant* God of Abraham, who had given him exceeding great and precious promises. *Bush.* ——As Abraham's servant has God's glory only in view in the errand on which he is going, he may well expect the divine direction. See with what simplicity and confidence he prays to God ! He even prescribes the way in which the divine choice and approbation shall be made known : and God honors the purity of his motives, and his simple faith, by giving him precisely the answer he wished. How honorable in the sight of God is *simplicity* of heart ! It has nothing to fear and all good to hope for : whereas a spirit warped by *self-interest* and *worldly views*, is always *uncertain* and *agitated ;* as it is ever seeking that from its *own counsels* and *schemes* which should be sought in God alone. In every place the upright man meets with his God, his heart acknowledges his Maker, and his Maker acknowledges him : for such an one, the whole economy of providence and grace is ever at work. A. C.

We can but admire the mingled shrewdness and strong common-sense of Eliezer, and at the same time the strong and confiding trust in Providence which he exhibits. Evidently the faithful Abraham's example had not been lost upon him, and this elder of Abraham's house was a man of faith also. The token which Eliezer asks of God is not merely an arbitrary token ; nor merely the demand of a sign from God. He adopts a token which at the same time shall prove the kindly nature of the woman whom he sought for his master, as well as to secure for himself the guidance of God. This does not at all detract from the simplicity of his trust in God. There is nothing incompatible between the exercise of a sound discretion and a childlike trust in Providence. He could not have hit upon a better method—one by which he could judge who of all the damsels was most desirable as a wife for his master. Eliezer furnishes here a beautiful illustration of the prin-

ciple, you must do the best you can and then look to God. You ask not a sign as a right. He did not; but merely entreated that God would grant him such a token as might direct him safely. S. R.——He felt it was for God rather than for him to choose a wife for Isaac. So he made an arrangement by which the interposition of God was provided for. He meant to make his own selection, guided necessarily by the comparative attractiveness of the women who came for water, possibly also by some family likeness to Sarah or Isaac he might expect to see in any women of Bethuel's house; but knowing the deceitfulness of appearances, he asked God to confirm and determine his own choice by moving the girl he should address to give him a certain answer. Having arranged this, "Behold! Rebekah came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder, and the damsel was very fair to look upon." In the Bible the beauty of women is frankly spoken of as an influence in human affairs. The beauty of Rebekah at once disposed Eliezer to address her, and his first impression in her favor was confirmed by the obliging, cheerful alacrity with which she did very much more than she was asked, and, indeed, took upon herself, through her kindness of disposition, a task of some trouble and fatigue. It is important to observe then in what sense and to what extent this capable servant asked a sign. He did not ask for a bare, intrinsically insignificant sign. The sign he chose was significant, because dependent on the character of the girl herself; a sign which must reveal her good-heartedness and readiness to oblige and courteous activity in the entertainment of strangers—in fact, the outstanding Eastern virtue. He would make no approach to any one whose appearance repelled him; and when satisfied in this particular, he would test her disposition. And of course it was these qualities of Rebekah which afterward caused Isaac to feel that this was the wife God had designed for him. *Dods.*

A wife is to be found for the heir of promise. This was a special concern of God, and so the single-hearted follower of Abraham makes it. He takes upon himself the choice of a maiden among those that come to draw, to whom he will make the request of a particular act of kindness to a stranger, and he prays God that the intended bride may be known by a ready compliance with his request. The three qualifications, then, in the mind of the venerable domestic for a bride for his master's son, are a pleasing exterior, a kindly disposition, and the approval of God. M.

**15.** *It came to pass before he had done speaking.* In the subsequent recital (v. 45), Eliezer says, "Before I had done speaking *in mine heart*," from which it appears that this was a *mental* instead of a *verbal* prayer; and in reference to the speedy answer with which it met, we may cite the very apposite remark of Bochart, that "so forward is God to bestow his benefits upon us, that they do not so much *follow* our prayers, as *prevent* and *go before* them." Is. 65 : 24, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." *Bush.*

**15–21.** The answer is immediate and direct. *He had not yet done speaking*, when the answer came. A damsel *very fair to look upon*, satisfying the taste of the old man, appears. He thereupon prefers his request, with which she promptly complies. The old man waits in wonder and silence to see if the Lord's approval will follow. M.

It was Rebekah whose ripe beauty in its early springtime caught first the stranger's eye, as she approached with the free step of a chief's daughter, bearing her pitcher gracefully poised, after the Syrian fashion, on her shoulder. It was Rebekah whose impulsive and decisive temper, more generous in her youth than when after years had developed its vein of craftiness, moved her to fulfil the appointed sign. With sprightly pleasure, making her fair face glow in the evening light, she hastened to empty her pitcher into the stone trough or gutter for the cattle which stood by the mouth of the well, then ran down the steps for more—glad to find in kindly activity something to vary the monotony of her wonted evening task. The character of this beautiful woman, who was about to enter the chosen circle and carry her contribution to the future race of Israel, was not of the same high type as Abraham, or even as Sarah. Much of Sarah's proud spirit was hers, indeed, with a similar tendency to give way to passing impulses. She was a woman of partialities, of likes and dislikes, to which she knew how to give energetic play. She shared the quick wit and fertility of resource which characterized both her brother Laban and her niece Rachel; but she gave no indication of that deeper sense of spiritual truth which had been the distinction of the Abrahamic branch of the family. Over the far less decided nature of her future husband she was destined to exert an influence only too great. Her character she transmitted in equal proportions to her twin sons. Esau shared his mother's restless energy and decision. Her favorite Jacob inherited her love of schem-

ing. Such was the woman on whom the steward gazed with surprise, while she steadily went on with her self-imposed labor, till all his ten camels had slaked their thirst. The token he asked had been so singularly fulfilled, that he unpacked his presents before it occurred to him to inquire whether the maiden came of the desired lineage. When he knew that, he hesitated no longer, but decked Rebecca with rich trinkets, dear in all ages to Eastern maidens. It was her turn now to be astonished; especially when she gathered whose servant he was, and from his fervent thanksgiving, perhaps, divined with a woman's quickness what his errand might prove to be. With characteristic impetuosity, she ran with the news to her mother. All that followed was natural enough. *Dykes.*

**21. The man looked stedfastly on her.** The concurrence of providences and their minute circumstances, for the furtherance of our success in any business, ought to be particularly observed with wonder and thankfulness, to the glory of God. We have been wanting to ourselves, both in duty and in comfort, by neglecting to observe Providence. H.

**26.** When the answers of Rebekah showed him that Jehovah had actually led him straight "to the house of his master's brethren," the man, fairly overcome by his feelings, "bowed down his head, and worshipped Jehovah." A. E.——**27. Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham.** He had prayed for good speed (v. 12), and now that he had sped well he gives thanks. What we win by prayer we must wear with praise; for mercies, in answer to prayer, lay us under particular obligations. H.——It would be difficult to point out a more striking instance of one who "acknowledged God in all his ways." He neither takes any step without prayer, nor receives any favor without praise. *Bush.*

**33.** The servant of Abraham is quite like his master in his dignified bearing and earnestness of purpose. Before accepting hospitality at the hands of Bethuel and Laban, he will have an answer to the commission on which he has been sent, nor can persuasions or entreaty prevail on him to prolong his stay, even over the following day. A. E.——We ought never to let a good resolution go to sleep; nor postpone till to-morrow what we can do to-day. Good in respect of earthly things, such decision is all important in matters that concern either our own or others' souls. Let men make Eliezer their pattern. He stands by Laban's table loaded with tempting viands, as firm in purpose and prompt in action as if the success of his mission was suspended on his own indomitable energy; while, as if nothing whatever depended on himself, but all on God, he raises his eyes to heaven, crying, "Oh, Lord God of my master Abraham, give me good speed this day!" And God did it. He touched the maiden's heart; to her brother's question, "Wilt thou go with this man?" this her frank and ready answer, "I will go." The steward's prayer was answered; and so also will be ours, whatever we seek, be it mercy to pardon, or grace to help, if we seek under the pressure of these weighty words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave, whither thou goest." *Guthrie.*

**50. Laban and Bethuel.** These seem both to be *brothers*, of whom Laban was the eldest and chief; for the opinion of Josephus appears to be correct, that Bethuel the father had been some time dead (see v. 28). A. C.

**53.** The gifts to Rebekah were her dower; those to her kindred were a sort of purchase-money, according to the marriage customs of the times. Her brother Laban, both here and in later transactions with Jacob, evidently had an eye to his own advantage. In fixing the time of parting, there is a quite natural contrast of brotherly interest and girlish eagerness. The confidence of Rebekah appears beautiful in its simplicity: but it was warranted by all that she had heard of her unknown suitor; and custom led her to acquiesce in the judgment and desire of her natural protectors. Her retinue of maidens were the guard of her modesty upon the way, and the promise of society in her future home. J. P. T.

**58. I will go.** Her motives were, no doubt, mixed. The worldly position offered to her was good, and there was an attractive spice of romance about the whole affair which would have its charm. She may also be credited with some apprehension of the great future of Isaac's family. In after life she certainly showed a very keen sense of the value of the blessings peculiar to that household. And, probably above all, she had an irresistible feeling that this was her destiny. She saw the hand of God in her selection, and with a more or less conscious faith in God she passed to her new life. *Dods.*

**59. And her nurse.** The name of this nurse was Deborah. We hear no more of her till we are told of her death. She appears to have survived her mistress, and to have died in the family of Jacob, much lamented. *Bush.*

——As Rebekah had her *nurse* to accompany her, so, at *this* day, the *Aya* (the *nurse*) who has from infancy brought up the bride, goes with her to the new scene. She is her adviser, her assistant, and friend ; and to her will she tell all her hopes and all her fears. *Roberts.*

**61.** When his servant marched forth to bring home Isaac's bride, a stately caravan of ten laden camels, with their drivers, bespoke the dignity of the shepherd-king. The camels went forth burdened with costly bridal gifts. They came home again laden with more costly spoil —for they bore back the bride and her attendant maidens. *Dykes.*

**62. He dwelt in the land of the South.** Probably at Beersheba. Abraham's later dwelling-places had been Hebron and Beersheba. After the sacrifice of Isaac, we find him dwelling at Beersheba (22 : 19), until we hear of the death of Sarah at Hebron. Very probably Abraham returned after this to Beersheba. And so Isaac, whether living with his father, or pitching his tent and feeding his flocks near him, is here represented as dwelling in the South country. In ch. 25 : 11 we find that, after Abraham's death, Isaac took up his residence at Lahairoi [in the region of Beersheba], to which we find that he had been on a visit, when Rebekah arrived, where perhaps he had already been pasturing his flocks and herds. E. H. B.

**63.** In this passage Isaac is introduced for the first time, so as to make the reader in part acquainted with him. There is a most observable dramatic variety between him and Abraham—the father evidently a larger man in every respect, and of higher grade, so as to qualify him for the more arduous fortunes which he was called to encounter. Yet to Isaac belonged the mild majesty of private life, and we figure his to be more a life of peaceful and domestic piety. It was probably in the spirit of religion that he went out to meditate at the eventide—a fine picture this for the imagination to dwell upon—a good and holy man of old walking forth among the beauties of nature, and engaged in the contemplation of Nature's God. T. C.——Twilight, "nature's vesper-bell," or the light shaded at evening by the hills of Palestine, seems to have called Isaac to a familiar occupation. This long-continued mourning for his mother, and his lonely meditation in the fields, are both in harmony with what we know of his character, and of his experience on Mount Moriah. Retiring and contemplative, willing to conciliate by concession rather than to assert and maintain his rights against opposition, glad to yield his own affairs to the strong guidance of some other hand, tender and deep in his affections, to him this lonely meditation seems singularly appropriate. *Dods.*

**64-67.** Whether veiled before or not, she now covered herself—her whole person—with the ample enveloping veil with which brides are still conducted to the bridegroom. Rosenmuller, in illustration of this passage, quotes an ancient father (Tertullian), who, with an express reference to the same text, observes, as a custom still existing in his time, that the heathen brides were also conducted to their husbands covered with a veil. It is still all but universal in the East, and it will be observed that it is used not only by the females whose faces are always concealed, both before and after marriage, but by those who display part or the whole of their faces on all ordinary occasions. It is, in fact, the indispensable costume for the occasion. *Pictorial Bible.*——Eastern etiquette required that Rebekah should dismount from her camel to meet one of the other sex. Still more was it becoming to veil herself in the presence of her destined bridegroom. In such a casual, informal fashion did these two meet, whom by His wise and singular providence God was bringing together. Nevertheless, they were made for one another ; and the first frank welcome with which cousin greeted cousin, ripened into a closer and dearer love, that was to fill all their long and placid lives. *Dykes.*

— Isaac hails at once Rebekah as his wife. "Very fair," of bright and keen intelligence, alert, and energetic, she was the very kind of bride he needed ; and the simple expression that "he loved her, and was comforted after his mother's death," tells what an affectionate husband she found in him. W. H.

We have here a description of the primeval marriage. It is a simple taking of a woman for a wife before all witnesses, and with suitable feelings and expression of reverence toward God, and of desire for his blessing. It is a pure and holy relation, reaching back into the realms of innocence, and fit to be the emblem of the humble, confiding, affectionate union between the Lord and his people. M.——What an insight into the primitive age ! but what a cradle also for the earliest religious history ! It is like one of those ancient Patriarchal wells so often mentioned in the history. Its waters are still fresh and clear in its deep recess. It has outlasted all other changes. It ministers indeed only to human affections and feelings, but it is precisely to those feelings which are as lasting as the human heart itself, and which

therefore give and receive from the record which so responds to them, a testimony which will never pass away. A. P. S.

In the suitableness of Rebekah to a man of Isaac's nature, you see the suitableness of all such gifts of God as are really waited for at His hand. God may keep you longer waiting than the world does, but He gives you never the wrong thing. Isaac had no idea of Rebekah's character ; he could only yield himself to God's knowledge of what he needed ; and so there came to him, from a country he had never seen, a helpmeet singularly adapted to his own character. One cannot read of her lively, bustling, almost forward, but obliging and generous conduct at the well, nor of her prompt, impulsive departure to an unknown land, without seeing, as no doubt Eliezer very quickly saw, that this was exactly the woman for Isaac. In this eager, ardent, active, enterprising spirit, his own retiring and contemplative, if not sombre disposition found its appropriate relief and stimulus. *Dods.*

His father's goodness he retained, though not his greatness. Slow and infirm in action, shunning strife with his whole heart, he appeared to best advantage when called to suffer wrong. It is significant of the same disposition, that his spiritual life should have reposed on religious awe. The God of Abraham was also known as "the Fear of Isaac." At the same time there was in him, as often in such men, a clinging to stronger natures, especially of the other sex ; with much tenderness, therefore, and inwardness in the domestic affections, as well as a vein of quiet sentiment, such as one hardly expects to find in the earlier or ruder ages of society. For this reason, probably, Isaac strikes us as a more modern men than any other of the Hebrew fathers. His physique can scarcely have been robust, although he lingered to a greater age than either his father or his son. Fifty years before his death, he is represented as already a blind, bedridden invalid, in daily apprehension of his end. And though he lived to see his sons old men, and his grandson Joseph sold into Egypt, yet during the whole of that last half century of his life, he disappears entirely from the family annals. *Dykes.*

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God would have us recognize in our lives what He shows us in this chapter, that He has made provision for our wants, and that if we wait upon Him He will bring us into the enjoyment of all we really need. So that if we are to make any advance in appropriating to ourselves God's salvation, it can only be by submitting ourselves implicitly to His providence, and taking care that in the commonest and most secular actions of our lives we are having respect to His will with us, and that in those actions in which our own feelings and desires seem sufficient to guide us, we are having regard to His controlling wisdom and goodness We are to find room for God everywhere in our lives, not feeling embarrassed by the thought of His claims even in our least constrained hours, but subordinating to His highest and holiest ends everything that our life contains, and acknowledging as His gift what may seem to be our own most proper conquest or earning. *Dods.*

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# Section 53.

## KETURAH'S SONS. BIRTH OF ESAU AND JACOB. BIRTHRIGHT DESPISED. DEATH OF ABRAHAM. ISHMAEL'S DEATH. CHARACTER OF ABRAHAM.

GENESIS 25 : 1–34.

1 AND Abraham took another wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran,
2 and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba,
3 and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the
4 sons of Midian ; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were
5 the children of Keturah. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons
6 of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts ; and he sent them away from
Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.
19 And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son : Abraham begat Isaac : and Isaac
20 was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paddan-

21 aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian, to be his wife. And Isaac intreated the LORD for his
wife, because she was barren : and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife con-
22 ceived. And the children struggled together within her ; and she said, If it be so, wherefore
23 do I live? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations
are in thy womb,—And two peoples shall be separated even from thy bowels :—And the one
24 people shall be stronger than the other people ;—And the elder shall serve the younger.—And
25 when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the
26 first came forth red, all over like an hairy garment ; and they called his name Esau. And
after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel ; and his name was
27 called Jacob : and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew :
and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field ; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in
28 tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison : and Rebekah loved Jacob.
29 And Jacob sod pottage : and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint : and Esau said to
30 Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage;* for I am faint : therefore was his
31 name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold,
32 I am at the point to die : and what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said,
33 Swear to me this day ; and he sware unto him : and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. And
34 Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils ; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and
went his way : so Esau despised his birthright.

7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore
8 and fifteen years. And Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man,
9 and full *of years;* and was gathered to his people. And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried
him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is
10 before Mamre ; the field which Abraham purchased of the children of Heth : there was Abra-
11 ham buried, and Sarah his wife. And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God
blessed Isaac his son ; and Isaac dwelt by Beer-lahai-roi.

12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's
13 handmaid, bare unto Abraham : and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their
14 names, according to their generations : the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth ; and Kedar, and
15 Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa ; Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Na-
16 phish, and Kedemah : these are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their vil-
17 lages, and by their encampments ; twelve princes according to their nations. And these are
the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years : and he gave up the
18 ghost and died ; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur
that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria : he abode in the presence of all his brethren.

### KETURAH AND HER SONS (VS. 1–6).

**1–6.** We read that Abraham "took another wife," Keturah, and that she bore him six sons, but we are not sure of the time when this occurred. At any rate, the history of these sons is in nowise mixed up with that of the promised seed. A. E.——According to the laws of Hebrew composition, this event may have taken place before that recorded in the close of the previous chapter. Of this law we have several examples in this very chapter. And there is nothing contrary to the customs of that period in adding wife to wife. We cannot say that Abraham was hindered from taking Keturah in the lifetime of Sarah by any moral feeling which would not also have hindered him from taking Hagar. It has been also noticed that Keturah is called a concubine (1 Chron. 1 : 32), which is thought to imply that the proper wife was still living. M.

This whole passage is probably placed out of its chronological order so as not to break in upon the main narrative before. And the very statement that Abraham settled the sons of his secondary wives by deed of gift during his life indicates that this marriage had occurred long before. It may seem strange that Abraham, the father of the faithful, should thus be found setting aside the original law of marriage—the union of *twain*—and only between twain—as one flesh, established at creation, re-established by the example of Noah and his sons, and afterward so expressly declared to be the law of God by our Saviour and his apostles. We must bear in mind, however, that we are unable now to fully comprehend the reasons for these exceptionable cases in the patriarchal age. S. R.

The origin or nationality of Keturah is unknown. Unlike his former marriages, this connection lay entirely outside the history of revelation, and for that reason is dismissed with the

briefest possible notice. In all likelihood she was slave-born, in which case she would become a wife of the second rank, like Hagar. A marriage of this class constituted a perfectly legal and valid union. It formed a permanent conjugal relationship, to the duties of which both parties were bound to be faithful, and which could only be dissolved by divorce or death. The principal points in which it differed from marriage of the first degree were two : it conferred upon the wife a lower social status, and the issue of it, though legitimate, possessed no legal claim upon the inheritance. The only mode, therefore, in which provision could be made for the children of secondary marriages, was for the parent to endow them during his own lifetime with a portion of his property. This is accordingly what Abraham did with his second family. Since he survived Sarah his wife no fewer than forty years, there was time enough for the six boys of Keturah to grow up to manhood, and receive before his death flocks and herds sufficient to set them up on their own account. In order to avoid all risk of future unpleasantness, and to leave the original settlement in Isaac's unencumbered occupation, Abraham prudently sent these young sons into unoccupied territory to the eastward of his own pasture-lands. There they became the founders of Arab tribes, which in subsequent ages extended from the Elanitic gulf of the Red Sea through Arabia Felix into the plateau which stretches on the further side of Moab. Thus, through the numerous offshoots of the Keturah line, as well as through Hagar's son, there was abundantly fulfilled that portion of the covenant promise which predicted for the patriarch a multitudinous and enduring posterity : " Thy name shall be Abraham : for a father of many nations have I made thee." *Dykes.*

The marriage of Abraham to Keturah probably took place in the lifetime of Sarah ; and of this union were born six sons —Zimram, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah—all of whom probably became heads of separate tribes. Of these tribes, excepting the Midianites, we hardly know anything. The whole of them seem to have been portioned by Abraham, and sent forth in the lifetime of their father to seek their fortunes in " the east country"—a phrase variously understood as signifying the Arabian desert east of Palestine, or the whole territory of Arabia. But in regard to the Midianites our information is comparatively complete. The Midianites occupied a prominent position in the history of Moses, who, when he fled from Egypt, took up his residence in their territories and married the daughter of one of their chiefs ; in the history of the conquest of the trans Jordanic provinces (Num. 22 : 4 ; 25 : 17 ; 31 : 2) ; and in the history of the Judges, but especially of Gideon (Jud. 6, 7, 8), by whom their power, as one of the most active and bitter of the early enemies of Israel, was finally broken. Israel, it may be noted, suffered not more from their open acts of hostility than from their too successful attempts (Numb. 25 : 18) to lead them astray from the injunctions of the law of Moses, in which direction it is supposed their influence was the more powerful and effectual in consequence of the blood relationship between the two peoples, through their common descent from Abraham. *Lee.*——Allusion is probably made to these descendants of Abraham under the title of " children of the East " (Judg. 6 : 3) ; and also Job 1 : 3, where Job himself, who may have descended from this stock, is called " the greatest of the people of the East." *Bush.*

### Birth and Boyhood of Esau and Jacob (vs. 19–28).

**19, 20.** Abraham seems to have spent the latter years of his life in peaceful retirement, having settled along the southern borders of Palestine. There, by the well Lahairoi, we also find Isaac. This quiet, solitary district, far from the busy haunts of the Canaanites, is adapted to his retiring disposition. As formerly Abraham, so is Isaac now called upon to hope and to wait. For twenty years *his wife is barren*, and during this lengthened period he has sufficient occasion to exercise his faith in the promise. K.

**19.** The well-known formula, " These are the generations," introduces a new portion of the history, which now resumes the main line of the patriarchal descent. The repetition of the fact of Isaac's birth is in the manner of these resumptions. Of a like kind is the recapitulation in ver. 20 of Isaac's marriage. It would seem as if these portions were intended to be used separately, and each to carry completeness in itself. Kalisch remarks, " These reiterations, natural in themselves, far from causing difficulty, are in harmony not only with the style of the Bible, but of ancient historiography in general, and are in this instance not without a positive gain, for they add the valuable chronological fact, that Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah, a statement of decided importance for the exact understanding of several circumstances connected with Isaac's history." *Alf.*

The ninth document here begins with the

usual phrase, and continues to the end of the thirty-fifth chapter. It contains the history of the generations of Isaac ; that is, of his son Jacob. Isaac himself makes little figure in the sacred history. Born when his mother was ninety, and his father a hundred years of age, he is of a sedate, contemplative, and yielding disposition. Consenting to be laid on the altar as a sacrifice to God, he had the stamp of submission early and deeply impressed on his soul. His life corresponds with these antecedents. Hence, in the spiritual aspect of his character he was the man of patience, of acquiescence, of susceptibility, of obedience. His qualities were those of the son, as Abraham's were those of the father. He carried out, but did not initiate ; he followed, but did not lead ; he continued, but did not commence. Accordingly, the docile and patient side of the saintly character is presented to our view. M.

Though he had been now united to Rebekah for twenty years, yet the child of promise continues to be denied. In this manner God had before tried his father Abraham ; and if he be heir to his blessings, he must expect to inherit a portion of his trials. Yet we do not find that in this emergency he had recourse like Abraham in similar circumstances, to any crooked policy, to any doubtful expedient. He looks for relief to that source only where he was accustomed to seek and to find the cure or the solace of all his ills. "He entreated the Lord for his wife ;" or rather as the Hebrew expresses it, *before his wife : i.e.* in her presence ; united with her in joint supplication. *Bush.*——For twenty years the union of Isaac and Rebekah had remained unblessed with children, to indicate that here also the heir to the promises must be a gift from God granted to expectant faith. At last Jehovah listened to Isaac's "entreaty," "for his wife;" or rather, literally, "over against his wife," for, as Luther strikingly remarks : "When I pray for any one, I place him right in view of my heart, and neither see nor think of anything else, but look at him alone with my soul ;" and this is true of all intercessory prayer. A. E.

The prayer with which Isaac "intreated" the Lord for his wife was a prayer of deeper intensity than he could have uttered had he merely remembered the story that had been told him of his own birth. God must be recognized again and again and throughout as the Giver of life to the promised line. We are all apt to suppose that when once we have got a thing in train and working we can get on without God. How often do we pray for the bestowal of a blessing, and forget to pray for its continuance? How often do we count it enough that God has conferred some gift, and, not inviting Him to continue His agency, but trusting to ourselves, we mar His gift in the use? On His own means you must reinvite His blessing, for without the continuance of His aid you will make nothing of the most beautiful and appropriate helps He has given you. *Dods.*

**23.** It has been much discussed where or to whom Rebekah could go to inquire of Jehovah. In our ignorance of so much which regards patriarchal religion, it is out of the question to speak dogmatically. But with a prophet like Abraham still at the head of her family, there seems little need to imagine other channels of intercourse with the Deity. *Dykes.*

**23. Two nations are in thy womb.** We have ample proof that these prophecies were not meant so much of *single persons*, as of *whole nations* descended from them ; for what was predicted concerning *Esau* and *Jacob* was not verified in *themselves*, but in their *posterity*. The *Edomites* were the offspring of *Esau*, as the *Israelites* were of *Jacob*. And who but the author and giver of life could foresee that *two children in the womb* would multiply into *two nations?* Jacob had *twelve* sons, and their descendants were all united and incorporated into one nation ; and what an overruling providence was it that two nations should arise from the two sons only of Isaac? And that they should be two such *different* nations. The *Edomites* and *Israelites* have been from the beginning two such *different people* in their manners, customs and religion, as to be at perpetual variance among themselves. The *children struggled together in the womb*, which was an omen of their future disagreement : and when they grew up to manhood, they manifested very different inclinations. Esau was a *cunning hunter*, and delighted in the sports of the field : Jacob was a *plain man dwelling in tents*—minding his sheep and his cattle (ver. 27). The religion of the Jews is well known ; but whatever the Edomites were at first, in process of time they became *idolaters*. When Amaziah king of Judah overthrew them, he brought their gods and set them up to be his gods. The king of Edom having refused a passage to the Israelites through his territories on their return from Egypt, the history of the Edomites afterward is little more than the history of their wars with the Jews.

**The one people shall be stronger than the other people.** For some time the family of Esau was the more powerful of the two ; there having been *dukes* and *kings* in

Edom, before there was any king in Israel (Gen. 36 : 31), but David and his captains made an entire conquest of the *Edomites*, slew several thousands of them (1 Kings 11 : 16 ; 1 Chron. 18 : 12), and compelled the rest to become tributaries, and planted garrisons among them to secure their obedience (2 Sam. 8 : 14). In this state of *servitude*, they continued about *one hundred and fifty* years, without a king of their own ; being governed by deputies or viceroys appointed by the kings of Judah, but in the days of Jehoram they revolted, recovered their liberties and set up a king of their own (1 Kings 22 : 47). Afterward Amaziah king of Judah gave them a total overthrow in the valley of salt (2 Kings 14 : 7). And Azariah took *Elath* a commodious harbor on the Red Sea from them (2 Kings 14 : 22). Judas Maccabeus also attacked and defeated them with the loss of more than *twenty thousand* at two different times, and took their chief city *Hebron* (1 Macc. 5 : 2 ; 2 Macc. 10). At last, *Hyrcanus* his nephew took other cities from them, and reduced them to the necessity of leaving their country or embracing the Jewish religion : on which they submitted to be *circumcised* and became proselytes to the Jewish religion, and were ever after incorporated into the Jewish church and nation. *Bp. Newton.*

ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT (VS. 29–34).

**29, 30.** At Beersheba Jacob was cooking for himself a very savory mess of red lentils. Just as it is ready, Esau returns from a long day's unsuccessful hunting, faint with fatigue, famishing with hunger. We are told of the Arab by those who know him well that his hunger is madness. This madness is now upon Esau. As he looks at the pottage and scents its exciting fragrance, he exclaims, "Feed me, I pray thee, with that red—that red!" He knows not what to call it. His wily brother, perceiving how passionately impatient he is, at once seizes the opportunity, and guarding the food so coveted, says to him, "Sell me this day thy birthright." He knew that this birthright belonged to his brother as the firstborn. Besides a double portion of the household estate, and headship over the family and tribe, in the case of Abraham and his descendants this birthright carried with it the entail of the higher spiritual blessings of the covenant. W. H.

**30. Edom.** Which signifies *red*. Whence the city which he built and the country which his posterity inhabited were called by the same name ; and by the Greeks, *Idumæa :* bordering toward the south on Judea, Arabia, and Egypt. *Bp. Patrick.*

**31. Sell me this day thy birthright.** The birthright, or right of primogeniture, had many privileges annexed to it. The firstborn was consecrated to the Lord (Exod 22 : 29) ; had a double portion of the estate allotted him (Deut. 21 : 17) ; had a dignity and authority over his brethren (Gen. 49 : 3) ; succeeded in the government of the family or kingdom (2 Chron. 21 : 3) ; and, as some with good reason imagine, succeeded to the priesthood or chief government in matters ecclesiastical. He had a right to challenge the particular blessing of his dying parent ; he had the covenant which God made with Abraham, that from his loins Christ should come, consigned to him : and what is more, these prerogatives were not confined to his person only but descended to his latest posterity, in case they comported themselves so as to deserve them. *Slackhouse.*

**32.** Esau came from the hunting-field worn and hungry ; the only means of procuring the tempting mess of his brother's pottage was the sacrifice of his father's blessing, which in those ages carried with it a substantial advantage ; but that birthright could be enjoyed only after *years*—the pottage was *present*, near and certain ; therefore he sacrificed a future and higher blessing for a present and lower pleasure. For this reason Esau is the Bible type of worldliness : he is called in Scripture a profane, that is, not a distinctly vicious, but a secular or worldly person – an overgrown child ; impetuous, inconsistent, not without gleams of generosity and kindliness, but ever accustomed to immediate gratification. In this worldliness, moreover, is to be remarked the gamester's desperate play. There is a gambling spirit in human nature. Esau distinctly expresses this : "Behold I am at the point to die, and what shall my birthright profit me?" He might never live to enjoy his birthright ; but the pottage was before him, present, certain, *there*. F. W. R.——Just this trait, the exaggeration of the value of a low and present impulse and the belittling of the high and distant, marks the most fatal defect of human nature. Every sinful, mean, and base act ever committed comes of just this, that the present appetite or wish seems a great matter. We are ready to die without it, while God and holiness, honor, the future, which are the birthright of every man as son of God, seem an uninteresting or distant good. *Mercer.*——The man who has fallen under the power of appetite *must* have his appetite satisfied. No consideration of consequences can be listened to or

thought of ; the man is helpless in the hands of his appetite—it rules and drives him on, and he is utterly without self-control ; nothing but physical compulsion can restrain him. *Dods.*

**33. Swear to me this day.** Moses, who records this conduct of Jacob, does not commend him for it. God, indeed, before he was born designed and promised this privilege to him : but then he should have waited till the Divine Wisdom had found out the means of executing his promise in his own way, as David did till God gave him possession of Saul's kingdom : and not have anticipated God, and snatched it by an irregular act of his own. In the whole affair Jacob acted with a subtilty not at all becoming an honest man. He knew that delays were dangerous and that his brother's consideration might possibly spoil his bargain ; and therefore he required haste both in the sale and in his oath ; and thereby incurred another sin by hurrying his brother into an oath by precipitation, which neither he should have taken nor Jacob have advised him to take, without mature advice and deliberation. Esau, for this mess of pottage, yielding to the temptation of the moment, renounced, both for himself and his descendants, all the privileges of primogeniture, and the covenant which God made with Abraham, that from him the Messiah should descend. *Stackhouse.*——There was never any meat, except the forbidden fruit, so dear bought as this broth of Jacob ; in both the receiver and the eater is accursed : every true son of Israel will be content to purchase spiritual favors with earthly ; and that man hath in him too much of the blood of Esau, who will not rather die than forego his birthright. *Bp. H.*

The character of Jacob is easily understood. It has frequently been remarked of him that he is thoroughly a Jew, that in him you find the good and bad features of the Jewish character very prominent and conspicuous. He has that mingling of craft and endurance which has enabled his descendants to use for their own ends those who have wronged and persecuted them. Yet, while one recoils from this craftiness and management, one cannot but admire the quiet force of character, the indomitable tenacity, and, above all, the capacity for warm affection and lasting attachments, that he showed throughout. *Dods.*

Jacob's value of the birthright marked him as fit for it. This did not justify his fraud and injustice in reaching the good ; but, in some degree at least, the light which led astray was light from heaven. And it was an age when there were but low ideas of justice in the earth, and when the chosen family, though somewhat enlightened, yet shared in the general morals of the time. That you must always keep in view, and not transfer to that rude period the Christian feelings and ideas of to-day. *Mercer.*

This unbrotherly, ungenerous, ignoble attempt to filch the birthright out of Esau's hands, is the one solitary incident recorded in the first seventy-seven years of Jacob's life. He got no benefit by it. It did not alter his position for the better in the least. It was not upon Esau's having voluntarily bartered away the birthright that his deprival of it by Isaac rested ; nor did Jacob himself ever venture to make that barter the basis of his claim. The fifty years or more that intervened between this and the next recorded incident in Jacob's history, do not seem to have much changed his character. W. H.

We may supply in the background, from the intimation of his mother's favoritism, that the promises attaching to the birthright, unheeded by the free-rover Esau, were thoroughly understood and valued by Rebekah and her son. That such a consideration has two sides to it, one looking toward good, the other toward evil, is an inconsistency found in history because it is found in man. *Alf.*

There is in Esau's conduct and after-experience so much to stir serious thought, that one always feels as if much more ought to be made of it. It reflects so many features of our own conduct, and so clearly shows us what we are from day to day liable to, that we would wish to take it with us through life as a perpetual admonition. Who does not know of those moments of weakness, when we are fagged with work, and with our physical energy our moral tone has become relaxed ? Who does not know how, in hours of reaction from keen and exciting engagements, sensual appetite asserts itself, and with what petulance we inwardly cry, We shall die if we do not get this or that paltry gratification ? We are, for the most part, inconstant as Esau, full of good resolves to-day, and to-morrow throwing them to the winds—to-day proud of the arduousness of our calling, and girding ourselves to self-control and self-denial, to-morrow sinking back to softness and self-indulgence. Not once, as Esau, but again and again we barter peace of conscience and fellowship with God and the hope of holiness, for what is, in simple fact, no more than a bowl of pottage. Even after recognizing our weakness and the lowness of our tastes, and after repenting with self-loathing and misery, some slight pleasure is enough to upset our steadfast mind, and make us as plastic as clay in the hand of

circumstances. It is with positive dismay one considers the weakness and blindness of our hours of appetite and passion ; how one goes then like an ox to the slaughter, all unconscious of the pitfalls that betray and destroy men, and how at any moment we ourselves may truly sell our birthright. *Dods.*

DEATH AND BURIAL OF ABRAHAM (VS. 7–12).

Dates and ages are carefully noted by the true student, who derives from them much interesting information. See how this applies here. Abraham survived Sarah thirty-eight years. Isaac was thirty-seven years old when his mother died ; and as he was forty years old when he married Rebekah, we learn that the camp of Abraham remained for three years without a mistress. Again, Isaac was sixty years of age before his sons Esau and Jacob were born. Thus, for more than twenty years, the heir of the promises remained childless ; and Abraham, but for his faith, must have been sorely tried by this second long protraction of the hope he most cherished. This is among the trials of his faith not recorded, and only discoverable by the comparison of dates. Again, by looking at his age when he died, and comparing it with the age of Isaac when his sons entered the world, we see that Abraham not only waited twenty years before his grandsons were born, but actually lived to see them fifteen years old ; so that Jacob and Esau might have had much intercourse with their venerable grandfather. Whether the elder of the two profited much by this advantage does not appear ; but it is probable that Jacob owed much of his strong faith in the Lord's providence to the example and instructions of the patriarch. *Kit.*

**7. These are the days of the years.** There is a fitness in this mode of expression, which is not sufficiently regarded. Good men do not live by *centuries*, though many such have lived several hundred years ; nor do they count their lives even by *years*, but by *days*, living as if they were the creatures only of a DAY, having no more time that they can with any propriety call their own ; and living that day in reference to *eternity*. A. C.

**8. Abraham gave up the ghost and died.** The English word "ghost" is supposed to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon "gast," *an inmate, inhabitant, guest*, and also *spirit ;* but in popular use it is now restricted to the latter meaning. But the primitive idea seems to be that of *dismissing the soul or spirit as the guest of the body.* It is almost always rendered in our translation by "expire," but the present version, "giving up the ghost," *i e.* yielding up the spirit, is liable to no serious objection.——**In a good old age.** Hebrew, *in a good hoary age ;* the idea *of grey-headed age* being prominent in the original term. This was according to promise. Upward of four-score years before this, the Lord addressed Abraham in vision (Gen. 15 : 15), saying, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace ; thou shalt be buried *in a good old age.*" In everything, even in death, the promises were fulfilled to Abraham. Thus died this venerable patriarch, the father of the faithful, after having sojourned as a stranger and a pilgrim in the land of promise one hundred years. From a comparison of dates, it appears that he survived Shem twenty-five years ; his father Terah, one hundred years ; and his wife Sarah, thirty-eight years ; that he lived after Isaac's marriage, thirty-five years. It was a life checkered with uncommon trials, and marked with blessings no less extraordinary ; a life distinguished by the most signal virtues, yet not exempted from frailties and infirmities. His chiefest happiness consisted not in his being favored with a remarkable degree of worldly prosperity, and an unusual term of years to enjoy it, but in the high distinction of being called "the friend of God," and made the depositary of a promise in which the whole world was to be blessed. *Bush.*

Abraham's case shows that God may have fulfilled a promise when he has apparently broken it ; and that God's promises are not to be measured by the narrowness and poverty of the letter. God promised Abraham and his seed a place or land called Canaan, and yet Abraham and his seed never held the land ; Abraham "sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise ;" he had "none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on ; yet God promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child" (Acts 7 : 5). Now, this brings us, so to speak, into close quarters with God's providence, and Abraham's character becomes a medium through which we learn divine lessons. *Abraham suffered for us.* It is beautiful beyond expression to see how the true idea dawned upon the mind of the man of faith, that is to say, how he got from the letter to the spirit, and saw God's meaning at last. When he came out of the land of the Chaldeans he had a very small notion of his future ; but as he went on and on, from Charran, building his altar and pitching his tent, his eyes pierced

beyond the little land of Canaan, and "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." J. P.

It is pleasant to remember that Esau and Jacob were brought up on the knees of their venerable grandfather. From his own lips might the second heir of promise learn as a boy the marvellous story, with all the glorious hopes which were to descend to him along with the birthright. The twins were growing lads of fifteen, old enough to indicate already what strong contrasts marked their disposition, when at last the weary hero of faith was called to his rest. Grandly sets the sun of such a life. An old age spent in domestic privacy with the young hopes of his line about his feet ; old age dwelling still with growing thankfulness upon the splendid revelations which had glorified its manhood and telling with unabated ardor the ever memorable tale,—surely this was a fitting and a beautiful close to the toils and trials of the noblest lifetime men had yet seen. With his character grown ripe, and his work done, with his name filling the lands, his family spreading on every side, and the sacred line of the covenant budding into another generation, nothing seemed awanting to fill up his cup, who to the end of time was destined to wear the name that is of all earth's names the purest : The Friend of God. Well may the page which records his end say, with touching and simple words, that he died in his hoary age, full and satisfied with life ! *Dykes.*

**Was gathered to his people.** This cannot mean that he was buried where his fathers had been buried, for he had been a hundred years a pilgrim in the land of Israel, far from the home of his ancestors, and he was buried in the cave of Machpelah. The place therefore seems to indicate the belief of the patriarchal ages in a place of departed spirits, to which the souls of the dead were gathered. Thus Jacob expected to "go down into the grave (to Sheol) unto his son," though he did not believe his son to have been buried, but to have been devoured by wild beasts. E. H. B. ——To be gathered is not to cease to exist, but to continue existing in another sphere. His peoples, the departed families, from whom he is descended, are still in being in another not less real world. This, and the like expression in the passage quoted, give the first fact in the history of the soul after death, as the burial is the first step in that of the body. M.

Were we to leave out of view the spiritual and eternal blessings conferred upon Abraham, how humble would be the conclusion of so grand a career. Vision upon vision, covenant upon covenant, promise upon promise, conducting only to a little cave in Hebron ! But from the divine declaration uttered three hundred and thirty years after this event, "I am the God of Abraham," it appears that his relation to God was as entire at that time, as at any former period in his whole life. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living ;" and the faithful of all past ages live with God, and their dust is precious in his eyes, in whatever cavern of the earth or recess of the ocean it may be deposited. *Bush.*

The doctrine of Immortality runs through the Bible. It is latent in the history of the creation and of the fall of man. It is involved in the statement that man was created originally in the image of God. The penalty which was the consequence of the fall—"Thou shalt surely die"—implies that the being to whom it was addressed had been before, in body as in soul, immortal. When it is said of Enoch that "God took him," this cannot mean that Enoch ceased to exist, any more than the same expression can have such a meaning when it is afterward used with reference to Elijah. The desire for nothing less than a heavenly country is the true key-note to the lives of the patriarchs. Immortality is the charm of the first great promise to Abraham ; immortality is the idea which underlies Jacob's description of this life as a pilgrimage. The patriarchs speak and act as men who sit loosely to all that makes this life dear ; and as each is *gathered to his people*, it might seem that the dogma of immortality is traced upon their sepulchres. H. P. L.

**9.** When Abraham died Ishmael was a man of nearly ninety and had long been a great desert chief. He reappears for a moment, and only once, at the patriarch's burial, at which Isaac and he met once more. It must have been a striking scene when the two brothers, so long separated, united to pay the last honors to one dear to both, and showed in their doing so their high sense of his worth. Isaac, with his hundreds of household slaves ; Ishmael, with his troops of wild retainers and half-savage allies, gathered before the cave of Machpelah, in the midst of the men of Heth, to pay the last duties to the Father of the Faithful, would make a notable subject for an artist. *Geikie.*——These are beautiful words as showing one side of Abraham's character ; "And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah." Those names are not united in any other transaction. Abraham never ceased to care for Ishmael, the son of the

bondwoman, the wanderer; and Ishmael showed how he valued his father's care by thus uniting with Isaac in the last act of filial love. J. P.

**10. There was Abraham buried.** At Hebron our thoughts are of him who at the call of God came forth from his own country and home, not knowing whither he went; of him who received in implicit confidence the assurance of a countless progeny, when as yet he had no child; of him who hesitated not to lay on the altar of sacrifice the son of his old age, the very child of promise; of him, the friend of God, who solemnly covenanted with God in behalf of his posterity, trusting the beneficent promise that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; of him who, looking down the long vista of the future, rejoiced supremely in seeing the day of Christ; of him who was contented to possess but a burying-place in the land which had been promised him and to live an exile upon earth, in prospect of "a better country even a heavenly." No wonder that the Hebrew hope of heaven was that of resting in Abraham's bosom. And who that takes in the full story of Abraham's life of loyal devotion to Jehovah, his Supreme Friend and Portion, but joyfully accepts the assurance of the Saviour in behalf of the spiritual descendants of Abraham, and prays that it may be made to include himself: "And many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" N. C. B.

ISHMAEL'S DESCENDANTS. HIS DEATH AND BURIAL.

**12.** *These are the generations of Ishmael.* The object of the inspired writer seems to be, to show how the promises of God were fulfilled to both the branches of Abraham's family *Isaac* God blessed according to the promise. He had also promised to multiply *Ishmael;* and an account of his generations is introduced, to show how exactly the promise had also been fulfilled to him. **14.** These three names have passed into a proverb among the Hebrews, because of their signification. *Mishmâ* signifies HEARING; *dumah*, SILENCE; and *massa*, PATIENCE. Hence, "Hear much, say little, and bear much." A. C.

**17.** This account of Ishmael's death, as well as that of Abraham's above, is inserted by anticipation, in order that the subsequent history of Isaac might not be interrupted. In point of fact, though the circumstance of his death is stated *before* the birth of Jacob and Esau, yet it did not happen till some years *afterward.* Abraham lived till they were fifteen years old, and Ishmael till they were sixty-three His death occurred 48 years after the death of Abraham, and when Isaac was 123. *Bush.*

**18. They dwelt from Havilah unto Shur.** The descendants of Ishmael possessed all that country which extends from east to west, from *Havilah* on the Euphrates, near its junction with the Tigris, to the desert of *Shur*, eastward of Egypt; and which extends along the Isthmus of Suez which separates the *Red Sea* from the *Mediterranean.* A. C.——His descendants adopted that wandering or nomadic life which shepherds and hunters require to follow in a region where but little food is produced either for man or beast. They appear to have been joined by the sons of Keturah, one of whom was Midian, the ancestor of the Midianites. While most of them followed the wild, roaming life, still familiar to the Arabs of the desert, others engaged in mercantile pursuits; and it is a proof that the Ishmaelites and Midianites had virtually become one people, that those merchants to whom Joseph was afterward sold are called, in different verses, by each of these names. W. G. B.

CHARACTER OF ABRAHAM—SUMMARY POINTS.

Abraham's *obedience* to the call of God and *faith* in his promises stand supereminent. Without *disputing* with his Maker or *doubting* in his heart, he credited everything that God had spoken: *hence he always walked in a plain way.* The *authority of God* was always sufficient for Abraham; he did not seek to find reasons for any line of conduct which he knew God had prescribed: it was his duty to obey; the success and the event he left with God. His obedience was as *prompt* as it was *complete.* As soon as he hears the voice of God, he girds himself to his work! To what a state of moral excellence the grace of God can exalt a character, when there is simple implicit faith and prompt obedience! Abraham *walked before God*, and *Abraham was perfect.* As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a neighbor, as a sovereign, and above all as a *man of God*, he stands unrivalled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the *model* and *pattern* of faith, obedience, and perseverance. A. C.——In these days, in the bosom of Christian civilization, obedience to God and confidence in God are the first precepts, the first virtues of Christianity. They were also the virtues of Abraham, and the precepts inculcated by Abraham's history in the Bible. And the God of Abraham, the God of the Bible, is the

same who is the object of adoration to the Christian of the present day. Thousands of years have changed nothing as to the biblical notion of God in the human soul, nor as to the essential laws regulating the relation of man with God. *Guizot.*

Abraham is the Emir of a pastoral tribe, migrating from place to place, his stations marked with geographical accuracy, and with a picturesque simplicity of local description ; here he pitches his tent by some old and celebrated tree, there on the brink of a well-known fountain. He is in no respect superior to his age or country, excepting in the sublime purity of his religion. He is neither demi-god nor mighty conqueror, nor even sage, nor inventor of useful arts. His distinction is the worship of One Great God, and the intercourse which he is permitted to hold with this mysterious Being. This is the great patrimonial glory which he bequeathed to his descendants ; their title to be considered the chosen people of the Almighty, was their inalienable hereditary possession. This is the key to their whole history, the basis of their political institutions, the vital principle of their national character. *Milman.*

The character of Abraham is one of the finest and noblest in all history, sacred or profane. He seems to have had a remarkably full acquaintance with the perfections of God ; to have often surveyed them with love and admiration ; and to have been profoundly impressed by them in his own conduct and feelings. Reverence, confidence, love and submission toward the Most High, appear through all his life, in colossal proportions. Along with this there was evidently in his character great shrewdness and common-sense ; he had large knowledge of the world, and much skill in the orderly management of its business ; great self-possession, good temper, meekness, and patience ; warm domestic affections, and an expansive, genial heart, that looked much to the welfare of others, and was ever ready, for their sakes, to sacrifice his own. There never was a more striking combination of great power and great gentleness than in Abraham. His generosity and nobility of disposition gave an elevation to his character which has never been surpassed in any mere man. Of his personal appearance we know nothing ; but we can readily fancy it marked by an imposing massiveness and symmetry, corresponding to the remarkable structure of his mind. There could not have been a man more fitted to fulfil the duties and sustain the honors that devolved on the Father of a nation and the Patriarch of a Church. W. G. B.

In how many varied and striking attitudes, each worthy of the artist's pencil, does Abraham present himself in the course of his eventful life - leading out the migration from Haran —crossing the Euphrates—pitching his tent at Sichem—kneeling before the altar at Bethel—standing silent before Pharaoh—heading the midnight assault--prostrate before God, moaning out his prayer for Ishmael—waiting on his three mysterious guests, at the tent-door, under the oak of Mamre—putting at early morn the bottle of water on Hagar's shoulder—bowing to the Hittites in the gate—bending with knife in hand over Isaac! Looking at him among all the greatest characters of Old Testament history, does he not appear, walking among his shadowy peers, the very stateliest in form, the most finished in proportion, the most benignant in aspect, the most graceful in movement, of them all? About his piety there is something singularly attractive—so simple, so domestic—the age, the country, the tent-life throwing over it the light as of an early Eastern morning, the freshness as of a breeze from the wilderness. Holding his own peculiar faith with a grasp of unrelaxing firmness, there is not a tinge in him of narrowness, moroseness, or fanaticism ; all is broad, open, and humane. By prospects of a name so great, a seed so numerous, an influence so wide upon this earth, pride might have been inflated, desires confined, and hopes concentrated on earthly blessings. But the greatest triumph of his faith (greater even than the one on Mount Moriah) was this—that he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country—confessed and felt continually that he was a stranger and pilgrim on the earth--lived and died desiring another country, even an heavenly. Thus it is that he hath obtained so good a report ; and that so wide over the earth, and down through all its generations, he has been, and shall be called, " The father of the faithful," " The friend of God." W. H.

What fed the faith wherein his great strength lay? Challenging comparison with any, and excelling all, in that grace, we may justly apply to him the glowing terms and bold figures of the prophet—" He was a cedar in Lebanon, with high stature and fair branches, and shadowing shroud—the cedars of God could not hide him —the fir-trees were not like his boughs, and the chestnut-trees were not like his branches, nor was any tree in the garden of God like unto him for beauty--his root," he adds, explaining how this cedar towered above the loftiest trees, giant monarch of the forest, " his root was by the great waters." And what that root found

in streams which, fed by the snows and seaming the sides of Lebanon, hottest summers never dried and coldest winters never froze, the unequalled faith of Abraham found in close and constant communion with God. Like Enoch he walked with God. Each important transaction of life was entered on in a pious spirit, and hallowed by religious exercises. His tent was a moving temple. His household was a pilgrim church. Wherever he rested, whether by the venerable oak of Mamre, or on the olive slopes of Hebron, or on the lofty, forest-crowned ridge of Bethel, an altar rose ; and his prayers went up with its smoke to heaven. Such daily, intimate, and loving communion did this grand saint maintain with heaven, that God calls him "his friend ;" and honoring his faith with a higher than any earthly title, the Church has crowned him "Father of the Faithful." He lived on terms of fellowship with God such as had not been seen since the days of Eden. Voices addressed him from the skies ; angels paid visits to his tent ; and visions of celestial glory hallowed his lowly couch and mingled with his nightly dreams. He was a man of prayer, and therefore he was a man of power. Setting us an example that we should follow his steps, —thus, to revert to language borrowed from the stateliest of Lebanon's cedar, thus was he "fair in his greatness and in the length of his branches, for his root was by the great waters." Yet the patriarch had his failings—as who has not?—and they are written to warn "him who thinketh he standeth, to take heed lest he fall." *Guthrie.*

No man ever won for himself an equally honorable place among men by qualities so imitable and within the reach of all. Wherever his foot trod or his fame spread, the homage of numberless generations has elevated the Hebrew exile of Ur almost into a divinity. And this unexampled honor has been won in a way equally without example, through the elevation of his religious character. Not as a leader of emigration ; not as a prosperous emir ; not as a captain of fighting men ; not even as an ancestor of nations ; neither as a witness to new truths ; nor as the confessor of an ancient faith. All these capacities he sustained, yet it was through none of these that he achieved his far-spread and lasting reputation. It was simply the purity and nobility of his personal piety which made him what he is. The simple, unworldly elevation on which through a long life he walked with God ; the entire self-abnegation with which he surrendered everything at the divine call ; the childlike confidence with which he received the words of his celestial Friend ; above all, the absolute trust he was enabled to repose in the character and promise of Jehovah, under temptations to distrust the most fierce and frequent,—these things it was which made Abraham great.

What lay, therefore, at the base of this man's strength and majesty of character was the virtue of devout faith. He struck the roots of his being deeper than other men into the unseen and the abiding. He realized the person of God as one Who is real, near, accessible, friendly, and trustworthy. In a word, "he believed God." It was this which made him strong. If he was a hero, it was simply because he trusted. This calm reliance on one Who is lifted far above the vicissitudes and the fears of time, lent to the whole character of Abraham a circumspection, a sense of safety and of power, a large and poised repose, which are most impressive. Next to his trust in God, his most eminent characteristic was perhaps his kindly and generous sympathy with men. That he was hospitable came as a matter of course. But how unselfish was he, to Lot, for example, or to the king of Sodom ! How nobly his open-handedness contrasts with the craft and meanness so often found in his kindred and descendants ! Save in the single matter of his wife's safety, he ever discovered a straightforwardness in speech and deed such as Orientals have rarely attained. From discord he shrank with almost as much sensitiveness as his son Isaac ; yet, when occasion required, how gallant he could show himself ! how prompt to move, how strong to strike ! At the same time, every excellence of character which his history enables us to trace will be found to have its real root and secret of power in the religious trust which held him to his God. It was the force and clearness with which he grasped the promises of Jehovah's covenant and found in God Himself and in God's friendship the strength, the reward, and the inheritance of his life, which made him of earthly goods so prodigal, so tolerant of present trial, and to other men so princely and so generous. *Dykes.*

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Abraham is our father, too, if we believe, for he is "the father of the faithful." If we blame him for aught of shortcoming or misdeed, we blame ourselves, for we are more to be reproached than he. Abraham lived in the twilight, we live in the full noon ; Abraham stood alone, we are members of the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, with throngs of friends around us, and blessed memories and

inspirations. Let us cultivate the pilgrim spirit. Let us "declare plainly that we seek a country." Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Bind the sandals, grasp the staff, tarry briefly everywhere, and though faint, be evermore pursuing, content with nothing less than heaven. J. P.

"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Much as has been added or altered since his early day, the road to peace with God and heavenly blessings is the same he trod. Fulfilled at last in the Seed of promise, which is Christ, and sealed anew with His costly blood, the covenant of friendship stands to this hour where it stood when first Jehovah contracted with His servant under the oak-grove of Mamre. The virtues which made Abraham great are virtues we all may follow. Surrender of everything to obey the voice of duty; trust, simple but solid, in the mere word of the Almighty's grace; loyal adhesion against all appearances, both to what God promises and to what He commands; with a steadfast, quiet strength to wait and hope for His salvation: what but these are the conditions under which any of us in gospel times, as in patriarchal, can reach the high title which Abraham wore, or the still higher title to which Jesus has advanced His disciples? He was God's friend. Henceforth the Son of God has called us not friends only, but brethren; his Father's children; sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ. *Dykes.*

## Section 54.

### ISAAC AND ABIMELECH. ESAU'S HITTITE WIVES.

GENESIS 26: 1–35.

1 AND there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abra-
2 ham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell
3 thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I sware unto
4 Abraham thy father; and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto
5 thy seed all these lands; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and
6 my laws. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: and the men of the place asked him of his wife; and
7 he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, My wife: lest, *said he*, the men of the place
8 should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon. And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window,
9 and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister?
10 And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and
11 thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all the people, say-
12 ing, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. And Isaac sowed in
13 that land, and found in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the
14 man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great: and he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household: and the Philistines envied
15 him. Now all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his
16 father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said
17 unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence,
18 and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which
19 his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well

20 of springing water. And the herdmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The
water is ours : and he called the name of the well Esek ; because they contended with him.
21 And they digged another well, and they strove for that also : and he called the name of it
22 Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and digged another well ; and for that they strove
not : and he called the name of it Rehoboth ; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room
23 for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land. And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.
24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy
father : fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant
25 Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and
26 pitched his tent there : and there Isaac's servants digged a well. Then Abimelech went to
27 him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host. And Isaac said
unto them, Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from
28 you? And they said, We saw plainly that the LORD was with thee : and we said, Let there
now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee ;
29 that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee
nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace : thou art now the blessed of the LORD.
30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the
31 morning, and sware one to another : and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him
32 in peace. And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him con-
33 cerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he
it called Shibah : therefore the name of the city is Beer sheba unto this day.
34 And when Esau was forty years old he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite,
35 and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite : and they were a grief of mind unto Isaac and
to Rebekah.

The story of Isaac is brief ; his life uneventful, perhaps we might say monotonous. The chapter shows that the Lord appeared to him on two distinct occasions ; at Gerar (2–5), renewing the covenant previously made with Abraham, with a very full restatement of all its salient points ; also at Beersheba (23–25) where we are told "he builded an altar and called on the name of the Lord," in the steps of his godly father. H. C.——Isaac was 75 at the time of his father's death, and 137 at the time of Jacob's flight to Haran. All that we know about him during the sixty-two intervening years is told us in this single chapter. Within its short compass is related everything in his recorded history which has an independent and distinctive character of its own, and is not wholly secondary and subordinate to some event in Abraham's life on the one hand, or to Jacob's on the other. In the absence of all note of time, it is impossible to say when in the course of the sixty-two years the events narrated in this chapter occurred. W. H.

It is the main purpose of this chapter to sketch the character of Isaac, and to exhibit the peculiar guidance of this patriarch as occasioned by his moral and spiritual wants. Elasticity of endurance, which does not resist evil nor contend against it, but by patience and yielding overcomes it, constitutes the *fundamental type* of the character of Isaac, and in this lies his real claim to greatness. It does not take from this greatness that in Isaac it is not free from weakness and instability.

**1–12.** A famine more grievous than that in the time of Abraham had visited the land of Promise. Following the example of his father, Isaac journeyed southward to Gerar, intending thence to pass into Egypt, which was considered the granary of the ancient world. But Jehovah appears unto him (for the first time). He prohibits him from leaving the land of his pilgrimage, and formally and solemnly transfers to him the blessing and promise given to Abraham, in all its threefold bearings (the outward increase of his descendants, the possession of the land, and the salvation of all nations through him). Isaac therefore remains in Gerar. The continuance of the famine induces Isaac to attempt combining tillage with his former occupation of rearing cattle. He is blessed with an hundredfold harvest, and he learns that even in a year of scarcity and famine, he need not have recourse to Egypt. K.

**1.** The present famine is distinguished from that which occurred in the time of Abraham (12 : 10). The interval between them is at least a hundred years. The author of this, the ninth document, is acquainted with the seventh document ; and the famine to which he refers is among the earliest events recorded in it. There is no reason to doubt, then, that he has the whole history of Abraham before his mind. **Unto Abimelech unto Gerar.** The

Abimelech with whom Abraham had intercourse about eighty years before may have been the father of the present sovereign. Both Abimelech and Phichol seem to have been official names. M.

**2.** Abraham might go safely to Egypt—Isaac might not: in firmness and decision of character there was a wide difference between the two men. A. C.

**3. I will be with thee.** Chaldean, "My Word shall be an help unto thee." To satisfy Isaac that he should never want a guide or a provider, the Lord renews to him the promises that had been made to his father Abraham. *Bush.*——**The oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father.** The Bible, from beginning to end, is the development of this grand idea of blessing from God to sinful man through redemption. It lies here in the beginning of history, in the promise to Abraham and Isaac, the key to the entire Bible and to all God's action in man's redemption; the key-note of that divine harmony of many parts which sweeps through all human history. This alone lifts the Old Testament above all heathen literature, and stamps it as divine. *S. Harris.*

**6–11.** Isaac had now laid aside all thoughts of going into Egypt, and in obedience to the heavenly vision sets up his staff in Gerar, the country in which he was born, yet there he enters into the same temptation that his father had been once and again surprised and overcome by, namely, to deny his wife and to give out that she was his sister. It is an unaccountable thing that both these great and good men should be guilty of so strange a piece of dissimulation, by which they so much exposed both their own and their wives' reputation. We see that very good men have sometimes been guilty of very great faults and follies. Let those therefore that stand, take heed lest they fall, and those that are fallen not despair of being helped up again. We see that there is an aptness in us to imitate even the weaknesses and infirmities of those we have a value for; we have need therefore to keep our foot, lest while we aim to tread in the steps of good men, we sometimes tread in their *by*-steps. H.——The fall of them that have gone before us, are so many rocks on which others have split; and the recording of them is like placing buoys over them, for the security of future mariners. *Fuller.*——But the incident teaches another and quite as important a lesson, viz. that in swerving at all from the strict path of duty, we may be furnishing a precedent to others of whom we little dream. No man knows, in doing wrong, what use will be made of his example. *Bush.*

The most celebrated saints of God are not secure from sinning: and from their faults there is no arguing to the prejudice of the Book, in which, as we find them recorded as matter of history, so we find them condemned as matter of morality. God has informed us of what passed, but not authorized it; and set the example before us, not for a pattern, but for a warning. *Augustine.*——Forgetting all the differences of time and place, we persist in giving these ancient Bible characters a modern conscience, with all Christian lights and virtues, and reading in their minds that which belongs to ours. This is unjust to these spiritual forefathers of the race, whose elevation we can never appreciate but by knowing their limitations and ignorance. *Mercer.*

**12.** He "sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold." In those eastern lands "the rates of increase vary from thirty to a hundred. A hundredfold was rare, and only in spots of extraordinary fertility." The town of Gerar, in the vicinity of which this first attempt at agriculture was made, lay on the southern edge of the great plain which stretched up northward till it joined that of Sharon. Of this plain, Mr. Grove tells us that "its fertility is marvellous; for the prodigious crops which it raises are produced, and probably have been produced almost year by year for the last forty centuries, with no manure beyond that naturally supplied by the washing down of the hill-torrents, without irrigation, without succession of crops, and with only the rudest methods of husbandry." The largeness of the return in the case of the first year's crop at Gerar may have been exceptional, but it was in harmony with the enlargement, in other directions, of Isaac's possessions, a memorable instance of the meek inheriting the earth. W. H.

**13. The man waxed great.** There is a strange and observable occurrence of the *same term* in the original: *And the man was* GREAT, *and he went, going on, and was* GREAT, *until that he was exceeding* GREAT. How *simple* is this language, and yet how forcible! A. C.—— **14. Flocks and herds and a great household.** He who blessed him in the increase of his *fields*, blessed him also in the increase of his *flocks;* and as he had extensive possessions, so he must have many *hands* to manage such concerns; therefore it is added, *he had great store of servants.*

**15. All the wells the Philistines had stopped.** In such countries a good well was a great acquisition; and hence in predatory wars it was usual for either party to fill

the wells with earth or sand. The filling up the wells in this case was a most unprincipled transaction ; as they had pledged themselves to Abraham by a solemn oath, not to injure each other in this or any other respect. A. C.——A more effectual mode of expressing envy or enmity could not well have been devised, as it was in effect to destroy the flocks and herds which could not subsist without water. *Bush.*——The *well* is the spring of life. It is the place of resort for the shepherds and herdsmen—here we may witness acts of courtesy or of stratagem—acts of religion—acts of civil compact—acts commemorative of things past—here the journey ends—hither the fugitive and the outcast repair—here the weary pilgrim rests himself—the lack of it is the curse of a kingdom. It enters as an element into the language of Holy Writ, and the simile, the illustration, the metaphor, are still telling forth the great Eastern apothegm, that of "all things WATER is the first." Of such value was the *well*—so fruitful a source of contention in those parched and thirsty lands was the possession of a *well!* *Blunt.*

**21.** Isaac took the right course : he said, "Pass on and find another well." His men "digged another well," and the men of Gerar "strove for that also : and he called the name of it *Sitnah*"—*Hatred.* Let us beware of hatred ; it takes the angel out of you ; distorts the countenance, takes out of the voice its frank trustfulness and sympathetic music. Hatred does not expend itself upon the victim : it expends itself in the ruin of the soul of the man who hates. He who hates cannot pray ; he who hates can offer no sacrifice upon God's altar that shall be accepted.

**22.** The leader being of sweet temper, the men went forward—"removed from thence and digged another well ; and for that the Philistines strove not" So Isaac said, "We will call this well *Rehoboth*"—*Room*, a place to stand upon. There is a place for every one of us, could we but find it ; some have a long, long search in quest of the right place. The well you have found is God's gift : your beautiful home, your happy family, your prosperous business. You did not perhaps come to that estate of contentment and enjoyment all at once. Remember your own difficulties, and have pity upon the fruitless exertions of other men. After that another well was dug, and Isaac said, "We will call it *Sheba*"—an oath, a covenant : a settled and unchangeable blessing. So the course of life runs—strife, hatred, room, striking of the hands in holy covenant. Happy is the consummation ; it is possible to us all under the providence of God. It is a surprising thing that we should have all this friction to pass through, if we look at some aspects of our character ; but if we look at other aspects, it is surprising that we have so little discipline to encounter and to endure. J. P.

Few things are more pleasing than the picture of Isaac, the gentle patriarch, yielding everything and finding everything ; as if his history was an antique pictorial illustration of the very words, "Give, and it shall be given to you." He yields his life on the altar on Moriah, and he finds it. In the strife he always gives up. By patience he is successful. And so "the man waxed great, and grew until he became very great." Yet we must not forget that there are things over which we should stand and strive. The all-yielding Isaac was rewarded more than the war-like Abraham, and Isaac led a far happier life than Jacob ; yet the character even of Jacob was higher ; and as to Abraham, he rises far above both. *Mercer.*——Men count that in a world of violence and wrong the meek will inevitably make themselves a prey ; that an Isaac, who gives up the well again and again rather than contend for it, will at length have nothing left him which he may call his own. But it is not so. Wonderful under God is the strength and power of meekness ; with it is ever the victory at the last : in the words of the eastern proverb, "The one staff of Moses breaks in shivers the ten thousand spears of Pharaoh." These "meek" shall in the end inherit all things, even this "earth," from which it seemed at the outset as if they would be thrust out altogether. *Trench.*

**23. To Beersheba.** Wearied with such disturbances in the Philistine country, he is all the more ready to go to Beersheba, the border town of the promised land, and the paternal homestead where the covenant blessings had been promised. Here God appeared to Abraham (chap. 20 : 1), and now he again appears here to Isaac (ver. 24), and yet afterward to Jacob (chap. 46 : 1–4). This place, therefore, was the place of high covenant interest. *Jacobus.* The first traveller in modern times who visited Beersheba was Dr. Robinson. Having, without knowing it, followed the very track which Isaac took from the valley of Gerar northward toward Hebron, "we reached," he says, "Wady-es-Sebá, a wide water-course. Upon its northern side, close upon the bank, are two deep wells, still called Bir-es-Sebá, the ancient Beersheba. The larger one is 12½ feet in diameter, and 44½ feet deep to the surface water, 16 feet of which at the bottom is excavated in the solid

rock. The other well lies 55 rods W.S.W., and is 5 feet in diameter and 42 feet deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance. Both wells are surrounded with drinking-troughs of stone for camels and flocks, such as were doubtless used of old for the flocks which then fed upon the adjacent hills. The curb-stones were deeply worn by the friction of the ropes in drawing up water by hand." Since this account was written, Beersheba has had many visitors, two of the latest being Dr. Tristram and Mr. Palmer. "About two o'clock," says the former (Feb , 1864), "we reached Beersheba, where the tents were already pitched round one of Abraham's wells. In front and behind is a vast uneven plateau, almost green, pastured over by thousands of goats, horned cattle, and camels, while several Arab encampments were in sight, drawn to this favored spot by the grateful wells and the comparatively abundant herbage." W. H.

**24. I am the God of Abraham.** These promises are the same for substance as were made to him on his going to Gerar (v. 2-4). But this prefatory declaration would at once renew the memory of all the promises before made, and direct the mind of Isaac to that abiding covenant entered into with Abraham, and to be transmitted to his posterity. *Bush.*——If Isaac himself had not also possessed his father's *faith*, he would not, merely for his father's sake, have received this divine promise of blessing. But by the mention of his father God appeals to his filial affection, and reminds him of his great example. The appellation is also admonitory of the close connection between parents and children, to the latter of whom, even after the former are departed, God remains unchangeably faithful. In fine, according to the exposition of Jesus himself (Luke 20 : 37, 38), it contains a loving intimation of the continuance of Abraham's existence before the Lord. C. G. B.

**For my servant Abraham's sake.** Upon the only two occasions (v. 5) on which the Lord was pleased to hold personal intercourse with Isaac the renewal of the promises to the son was linked in a peculiar manner with the obedience of the father. All through this section of his life we trace the strong disposition to copy his father's conduct Placed thus in like circumstances, he says of Rebekah, as Abraham had said of Sarah, "She is my sister." As the weaker man he is spared the trial to which Abraham was exposed. His wife is not taken from him. The protection comes before the peril. The discovery of the relationship is made. The peremptory edict of Abimelech is issued, and Isaac is permitted to dwell in the land in peace. W. H.

**25. He builded an altar there.** As an expression of his grateful sense of the divine goodness on the present occasion, and as a part of his habitual practice, he set up the *stated* worship of God on the spot which had been consecrated by similar observances in the days of his father. *Bush.*——We are no better than brute beasts if, contenting ourselves with a natural use of the creatures, we rise not up to the Author ; if, instead of being temples of his praise, we become graves of his benefits. Isaac first built an altar, and then digged a well. *Trapp.*

**28, 29.** "When a man's ways please the Lord, even his enemies shall be at peace with him," and there is something sacred in the character of a good man, to which the wicked often pay an involuntary tribute of respect and admiration. Discarding the envy which he may have cherished, he comes to do homage to a man highly favored of the Lord. *Bush.*

**30, 31.** Isaac entertained them hospitably, entered into a treaty of peace with them, and dismissed them courteously. Thus, in Isaac, we have a type of faith operating in an unostentatious, undemonstrative, and thoroughly quiet and self-sacrificing way ; and yet producing an impression, as we have seen, both salutary and powerful. *Hughes.*

It is certainly striking that the *events of Abraham's life*, and even *the resolutions which he took in consequence* of them, repeatedly recur in the history of Isaac. In the one and in the other case there was famine in the land of Promise. In the one case the patriarch *actually passed* into Egypt, in the other *he intended* to do so ; in both cases recourse is had to the same *falsehood* by which a wife is passed as a *sister ;* in one and in the other case *a covenant is made with Abimelech ;* in one and in the other case, we read in part of the *same stations*, of the *same wells*, of the *same origin* of the name Beersheba ; while lastly the *manifestation of God* and the *promises* appear in both cases to have taken place in the same manner and with the same tendency, and in consequence of them each of the two patriarchs erects an *altar* and *serves Jehovah*. Still, however similar the aspect of his life to that of Abraham, how different was his inward and outward position, owing to the difference of character between the two patriarchs! Abraham takes refuge in Egypt, and Isaac is about to imitate him. But Abraham learns only by the complications and dangers in which he is involved that

this device was contrary to the will of God. On the other hand, Isaac, whose greater weakness of character would not have been equal to the dangers which there threatened him, is by Divine intervention preserved from following the same device. Abraham loses his wife. The protection of God does not preserve him from this trial, although it delivers him from dangers which might thence have resulted. The weaker Isaac is spared this trial, and the protection of God manifests itself in this, that the falsehood of his pretence appears before it is too late. The similarity of their nomadic occupations and the continuance of former circumstances, account for the fact that in both cases we read of the same stations and wells, and of another alliance with Abimelech. But what a contrast between the personality of Abraham, who commands respect, and the patient yielding of Isaac. People do not interfere with the rights and privileges of Abraham, but Isaac must give place before continual hostilities and interferences. K.

*Esau's Hittite Wives.*

**34, 35.** The *Hittites* (sons of Heth, ch. 10 : 15), occupying the region around Hebron where Abraham often dwelt, were Canaanites of the race of Ham, and Abraham would not allow a wife to be taken for Isaac from among them (ch. 24 : 3). It is another significant indication of the reckless character of Esau, that he not only took *two* wives, but chose them both from this irreligious race. T. J. C.——They belonged to a family far gone in transgression and apostasy from God. The two wives chosen from such a stock were a source of great grief to the parents of Esau. The choice manifested his tolerance at least of the carnal, and his indifference to the spiritual. M.——Doubtless his father had given him the same charge which Abraham had done concerning his own marriage. And then it was a very undutiful, nay, an impious action, to marry with those people who were under the curse of God. The Scripture might well call him *profane;* for he seems not to have regarded either the curse or the blessing of the Almighty. *Bp. Patrick.*——The circumstance that *Esau* married two *Canaanitish wives* shows how much he had become estranged from the religious hopes and views of the chosen family. This should have opened Isaac's eyes to the perversity of his preference for Esau. K.

Esau forfeited his hereditary rights. To marry a Canaanitish woman was to lose his primogeniture. Where now your tears for Esau, the fainting hunter, who was taken at a disadvantage by his supplanting brother? Esau supplanted himself. To marry thus was to drop out of the entail, to forfeit position, and to commit hereditary suicide. It was *then* that Esau sold his birthright. Find out the roots and beginnings of things, and you will always discover that a man is his own supplanter : his own enemy. You will find far back—ten years ago, twenty, a quarter of a century—that a man did something which has been following him all the time. When the crises come that the public can look at, they pity him within the four corners of the visible crisis itself : they do not know how judgment has been tracking the man, watching him with pitiless, critical eye, waiting for its turn to come. J. P.

Between this marriage of Esau, and the history in the next chapter, there intervenes a space of thirty-seven years, as may be gathered by a collation of the statements of time given. *Gerl.*

## Section 55.

### JACOB'S DECEIT AND BLESSING. ESAU'S BLESSING.

GENESIS 27 : 1–40.

1 AND it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not
see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him, My son : and he said unto him, Here
2 am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore
3 take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me
4 venison ; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat ; that
5 my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son.
6 And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto

7 Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring
me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before
8 my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.
9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make
10 them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that
11 he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his
12 mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. My father perad-
venture will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon
13 me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only
14 obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his
15 mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the
goodly raiment of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon
16 Jacob her younger son: and she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and
17 upon the smooth of his neck: and she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had
18 prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. And he came unto his father, and said, My father:
19 and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau
thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my
20 venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast
found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God sent me good speed.
21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether
22 thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt
23 him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he dis-
cerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.
24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to
25 me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near
26 to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said
27 unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and
he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said,

28 See, the smell of my son—Is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed:—And God
give thee of the dew of heaven,—And of the fatness of the earth,—And plenty of corn and
29 wine:—Let peoples serve thee,—And nations bow down to thee:—Be lord over thy brethren,
—And let thy mother's sons bow down to thee:—Cursed be every one that curseth thee,—And
blessed be every one that blesseth thee.

30 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet
scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his
31 hunting. And he also made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father; and he said unto
his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.
32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn,
33 Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who then is he that hath taken ven-
ison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him?
34 yea, *and* he shall be blessed. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an ex-
ceeding great and bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.
35 And he said, Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said,
36 Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my
birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not
37 reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made
him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine
38 have I sustained him: and what then shall I do for thee, my son? And Esau said unto his
father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And
39 Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him,

Behold of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling,—And of the dew of heaven from
40 above;—And by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother;—And it shall
come to pass when thou shalt break loose,—That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck.

The story is one of the most picturesque and pathetic in the Bible. It fills the eye, and fixes itself in the memory of childhood. Old age bends over with unabated interest. But it is as humiliating as it is attractive, exhibiting an expenditure of contrivance, activity, self-posses-

sion, untruthfulness, profanity, all employed by wife and son, in practising a mean fraud upon such a husband and father, believed by both to be upon the bed of death. W. H.

That man must have a strange heart, who can read this chapter unmoved. It is however a very dark page of God's holy word. Sin and the punishment of sin fill the whole of it. *Isaac sinned* in aiming at a wrong object—he wanted to set aside the will of God. His object was defeated—Esau lost the blessing. Not only was his object defeated, but in aiming at it, he brought much sin on his family and much anguish on himself. *Rebekah sinned*, first by distrust of God, and then by fraud and deceit. Here lay her error and her sin, in thinking that with such vile things as these she could further the purposes of a holy God. If there was ever a case in which crooked means seemed allowable or excusable, it was this. But God will not bear with these things. We may say that we may prevent much evil or do much good by a slight transgression, and God in his omnipotence may overrule that transgression, as he overrules all things, to further his own holy purposes, but sin lies at our door; that act of ours is displeasing and hateful to him, as much so as though nothing but evil came from it. *The punishment* of Rebekah may appear slight, and yet to a fond mother like her, it must have been deeply painful. The curse was indeed on her, and it came in a form she little anticipated—she lost the son for whom she had plotted and sinned. As for *Jacob*, one sin makes way for another; one sin impels him to commit another. Falsehood comes after falsehood in quick succession, till at last, with a fearful hardihood, he employs the name of God himself to aid his deceit. For Jacob's punishment we must read the history of his life to see the extent of it. It followed him almost to his dying hour. And *Esau sinned.* "He despised his birthright"—that was his sin; he lost his birthright and its blessing—that was his punishment; and it was a just punishment; he only lost that on which he set no value. We too have a birthright, one so precious that houses and lands, all the silver and gold the earth contains, are as dross in comparison with it. There are blessings held out to every one of us, blessings put at this moment within our reach, which ought to make the heart of every one here burn as he hears of them—the pardon of sin, reconciliation with heaven, adoption into God's family, everlasting life and blessedness in his presence; not Canaan, not a land flowing with milk and honey on earth, but a kingdom in heaven, a world bright with the glory of an incarnate God and overflowing with his joy. And how are we treating this birthright? How are we acting with reference to these blessings? *Bradley.*

**Ch. 27:** The life of Isaac falls into three periods. During the first seventy-five years he is contemporary with his father. For sixty-one years more his son Jacob remains under the paternal roof. The remaining forty-four years are passed in the retirement of old age. The chapter before us narrates the last solemn acts of the middle period of his life. M.

**1-4.** As he lived to be 180, it must have been so many as forty-three years before his death that it is said of him that he was "old, and his eyes were dim that he could not see." The infirmities of age have come upon him prematurely. He is blind, infirm, bedridden. He remembers that his half brother Ishmael had died fourteen years before, at the very age to which he had now attained. He imagines that his own dissolution is near. He resolves formally and solemnly to invest his eldest and best-liked son Esau with all the rights which primogeniture bestowed. W. H.—It was probably at a moment of dangerous sickness when he bethought himself of imparting the blessing—and this conjecture is supported by the following *minute coincidences.* That Isaac was then desirous to have "*savory meat* such as he loved," as though he loathed his ordinary food: that Jacob bade him "*arise and sit* that he might eat of his venison," as though he was at the time stretched upon his bed; that he "*trembled very exceedingly,*" when Esau came in and he was apprised of his mistake, as though he was very weak; that the words of Esau, when he said in his heart "the days of *mourning* for my father are at hand," are as though he was thought sick unto death; and that those of Rebekah, when she said unto Jacob "should I be deprived of you *both* in one day," are as though she supposed the time of her widowhood to be near. I will add that the prolongation of Isaac's life *unexpectedly* (as it should seem) may have had its influence in the continued protection of Jacob from Esau's anger, the latter, even in the first burst of his passion, retaining that reverence for his father which determined him to put off the execution of his evil purposes against Jacob, till *he* should be no more. *Blunt.*

**4-29.** What hath careless Esau lost, if, having sold his birthright, he may obtain the blessing? Or what hath Jacob gained, if his brother's venison may countervail his pottage?

Yet thus hath old Isaac decreed ; who was not now more blind in his eyes than in his affections : God had forewarned him that the elder should serve the younger, yet Isaac goes about to bless Esau. That God, who had ordained the lordship to the younger, will also contrive for him the blessing : what he will have effected shall not want means : the mother shall rather defeat the son and beguile the father, than the father shall beguile the chosen son of his blessing. God inclines the love of the mother to the younger, against the custom of nature, because the father loves the elder, against the promise : the affections of the parents are divided, that the promise might be fulfilled ; Rebekah's craft shall answer Isaac's partiality. God doth oft-times effect his just will by our weaknesses ; yet neither thereby justifying our infirmities, nor blemishing his own actions. Here was nothing but counterfeiting ; a feigned person, a feigned name, feigned venison, a feigned answer, and yet behold, a true blessing ; but to the man, not the means : those were so unsound, that Jacob himself doth more fear their curse than hope for their success. *Bp. H.*

The *moral aspect* of the transaction is plain to those who are willing to see that the Bible represents the patriarchs as "men compassed with infirmity," favored by the grace of God, but not at all endowed with sinless perfection. It is just this, in fact, that makes their lives a moral lesson for us. Examples have occurred in the lives of Abraham and Isaac ; but the whole career of Jacob is the history of a growing moral discipline. God is not honored by glossing over the patriarch's great faults of character, which were corrected by the discipline of severe suffering. We need not withhold indignant censure from Rebekah's cupidity on behalf of her favorite son—so like her family—and the mean deceit to which she tempts him. Nor is Isaac free from the blame of that foolish fondness, which, as is usual with moral weakness, gives occasion to crime in others. What, then, is the difference between them and Esau? Simply this—that they, in their hearts, honored the God whom he despised, though their piety was corrupted by their selfish passions. Jacob valued the blessing which he purchased wrongfully, and sought more wrongfully to secure. But Esau, whose conduct was equally unprincipled in desiring to receive the blessing which was no longer his, was rightly "rejected, when he would have inherited the blessing." His selfish sorrow and resentment could not recall the choice he had made, or stand in the place of genuine repentance. "He found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears," and he is held forth as a great example of unavailing regret for spiritual blessings wantonly thrown away. The true state of Esau's spirit is shown by his resolve to kill his brother as soon as his father should die. P. S.

The honesty of the Bible, in narrating without extenuation the failings and sins of God's own people, is a token both of the historic truth and the divine wisdom of the record. The fact that God turns the wrong-doings of men to the furtherance of his own plans is never used to justify, or even to palliate, the sin. It was known to Isaac that Jacob was announced to be the heir of the promise ; but his partiality for Esau led him to attempt to forestall Divine Providence by giving his blessing in secret. Esau had rashly sold his birthright for a mess of pottage ; but he should have regarded his oath to his brother and have accepted the consequences. Jacob had taken a mean advantage of his necessity, and showed a disposition to overreach him. Though he shrank, at first, from the deception which his mother proposed, —lest his father should discover the cheat, and give him his curse instead of his blessing, -- yet the temptation proved too strong ; and, consenting to the first step, he was led from one fraud to another, until he even invoked the name of God to a lie : so easy is it to slide from sin to sin ! But Rebekah was the chief offender. She plotted the deception of Jacob, the imposition upon her aged and blind husband, the wrong to her firstborn. She attempted to make sure a divine promise by a pious fraud ; but she brought strife and bitterness into the household, and sorrow upon herself and her favorite son. Selfishness always brings sorrow, even when it puts on the guise of love. J. P. T.

Esau had no right, either divine or human, to claim the patriarchal blessing. The outward right which his birth might have given him had from the first been taken away by Him who rules the course of nature, and Esau himself had by a formal sale ceded it. Hence the blame of circumventing their father for the inheritance attached to Esau as much as to Jacob But the issue places him in the right position which God had destined for him. It was not *Rebekah's* way, in quiet faith, to wait for help from without and from above, so long as she could help or counsel herself. If God does not interpose. she is ready to assist with her wisdom. This perverseness and unbelief arose from the circumstance that the glory of God was not her only aim, and the fulfilment of His will not her sole object. The moral state of

*Jacob* was similar to that of Rebekah. But the Nemesis of history apportions to each of the four parties concerned their punishment. Isaac and Esau immediately feel the consequences of their conduct ; Rebekah and Jacob soon afterward. Just because her plan had been successful, Rebekah must send away her favorite during the dark of the night, destitute and helpless, nor will she *ever* behold his face again. The deceit of Jacob is repaid him in the same coin, and much sorrow, anxiety, labor, and want, are the consequences of his godless cunning. K.——He seems not to have been struck by the enormity of the deed as an offence against God. How great the contrast between his reasoning on this occasion, and that of his son Joseph when assaulted by a powerful temptation. "I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing," said the one ; "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God," said the other. But as he now sowed, so he afterward reaped. *Bush.*

**5-10.** When Rebekah sees Isaac actually preparing to pass Jacob by and bless Esau, her fears are so excited that she cannot any longer quietly leave the matter in God's hand, but must lend her own more skilful management. It may have crossed her mind that she was justified in forwarding what she knew to be God's purpose. She saw no other way of saving God's purpose and Jacob's rights than by her interference. The emergency might have unnerved many a woman, but Rebekah is equal to the occasion. She makes the threatened exclusion of Jacob the very means for at last finally settling the inheritance upon him. She braves the indignation of Isaac and the rage of Esau, and fearless herself, and confident of success, she soon quiets the timorous and cautious objections of Jacob. She knows that for straightforward lying and acting a part she was sure of good support in Jacob. Luther says, "Had it been me, I'd have dropped the dish." But Jacob had no such tremors—could submit his hands and face to the touch of Isaac, and repeat his lie as often as needful. *Dods.*

**19-24.** All the senses are set to examine ; none sticketh at the judgment but the ear ; to deceive that, Jacob must second his dissimulation with three lies at one breath : "I am Esau ; as thou badest me ; my venison :" one sin entertained fetcheth in another ; and if it be forced to lodge alone, either departeth or dieth : I love Jacob's blessing, but I hate his lie. I would not do that wilfully, which Jacob did weakly, upon condition of a blessing : he that pardoned his infirmity would curse my obstinacy. *Bp. H.*

I wonder how Jacob could so readily turn his tongue to say (v. 19), *I am Esau, thy firstborn.* How could he say, *I have done as thou badest me,* when he had received no command from his *father*, but was doing as his *mother* bade him ? How could he say, *Eat of my venison*, when he knew it came not from the field, but from the fold ? But especially I wonder how he could have the assurance to father it upon God, and to use his name in the cheat (v. 20), *The Lord thy God brought it to me.* H.——The baseness of Jacob is here coped by his blasphemy. It is no mean sign of the sublimity of Scripture that no word of disapproval is inserted in cases like this. The condemnation is left to the "discernment of good and evil" which we have "even of ourselves ;" and when passed, it is in the history's sequel, amply justified. The blasphemy is enhanced by the most solemn name of God being used, and his covenant relation to Isaac introduced : JEHOVAH thy God. *Alf.*

**23. So he blessed him.** Jacob got his father's blessing by a lie : but see what followed. His brother purposed to murder him ; he was in a manner banished from his father's house ; his uncle dealt deceitfully with him, as he had done with his father, and treated him with great rigor : and his mother, who put him upon this fraud, never saw him after. *Bp. Wilson.*——It is a strange and, in some respects, perplexing spectacle that is here presented to us—the organ of the Divine blessing represented by a blind old man, laid on a "couch of skins," stimulated by meat and wine, and trying to cheat God by bestowing the family blessing on the son of his own choice to the exclusion of the divinely-appointed heir. Out of such beginnings had God to educate a people worthy of Himself, and through such hazards had He to guide the spiritual blessing He designed to convey to us all. *Dods.*

**28, 29.** This promise (as was the case with most of them) is at first annexed to things seen and present ; hence it rises to the unseen future. The summit and the centre of the blessing is contained in the words, "Be lord over thy brethren ;" since thereby was signified that he alone was bearer of the blessing,—the others only shared the advantage through him. *Gerl.*

In the following chapter (ver. 14) the promise is made to Jacob, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed ;" and to this are to be referred in their full force those expressions, "Let people serve thee, etc." It appears that Jacob believed the Divine promises more than Esau. The posterity of

Jacob, likewise, preserved the true religion, and the worship of one God, while the Edomites were sunk in idolatry. And of the seed of Jacob was born at last the Saviour of the world. This was the peculiar privilege and advantage of Jacob, to be the happy instrument of conveying these spiritual blessings to all nations. *Stackhouse* ——However alike their temporal advantages in all spiritual gifts and graces, the younger brother was to have the superiority, was to be the instrument of conveying the blessing to all nations—*In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed:* and to this are to be referred in their full force those expressions—*Let people serve thee; and nations bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.* The same promise was made to Abraham in the name of God—*I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee* (ch. 12 : 3), and it is here repeated to Jacob. *Bp. N.*

**33.** He had given a blessing to one person under the impression that he was a different person ; must not the blessing go to him for whom it was designed? But Isaac unhesitatingly yielded. This clear recognition of God's hand in the matter, and quick submission to Him, reveals a habit of reflection, and a spiritual thoughtfulness, which are the good qualities in Isaac's otherwise unsatisfactory character. Before he finished his answer to Esau, he felt he was a poor feeble creature in the hand of a true and just God, who had used even his infirmity and sin to forward righteous and gracious ends. It was his sudden recognition of the frightful way in which he had been tampering with God's will, and of the grace with which God had prevented him from accomplishing a wrong destination of the inheritance, that made Isaac tremble very exceedingly. Esau only saw the supplanter, and vowed to be revenged. Isaac saw God in the matter, and trembled. *Dods.*——When the invisible hand presses again upon the inner springs of thought and feeling, and he utters the short but singularly comprehensive prophecy as to the future of the seed of Esau, the inward eye is fully opened ; no earthly shadow dims or blurs the vision. He weeps with Esau, does all he can to comfort him ; but he bows to God, whose hand he recognizes as making even the duplicity of man to praise. He shakes off the infirmity of faith under which he has been laboring, and says even of the treacherous Jacob, in whom he had been taught in so singular a way to recognize the heir of the covenant blessing, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." W. H.

**34. Cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry.** The language is very emphatic, and describes a poignancy of grief amounting to positive anguish. The time had now come that he bitterly bewailed his folly in despising and throwing away his birthright for so trifling a consideration. *Bush.*——Why did he not rather weep to his brother for the pottage than to Isaac for a blessing? If he had not then sold, he had not needed now to buy. It is just with God to deny us those favors which we were careless in keeping, and which we undervalued in enjoying. How happy a thing is it to know the seasons of grace, and not to neglect them! How desperate to have known and neglected them! These tears are both late and false. *Bp. H.*

"Esau found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully, with tears." Do not mistake that, as if it meant that Esau, wishing to repent, could not. Clearly, the repentance he sought for was his father's, not his own ; repentance in the sense of change of purpose ; and all his tears could not alter that purpose, or change the word once passed. He had sowed to the flesh, and expected to reap both the joys of the flesh and the peace of the spirit. This may not be. We reap as we have sown. *Robertson.*——Esau's trouble was a principle of profaneness in the soul, which was simply developed in the transaction between him and Jacob in his youth—which was developed again in his marriage of the two heathen wives—which was developed again in his murderous vow concerning his brother—which was simply developed more strongly in his utterly godless hypocrisy in marrying a daughter of Ishmael under the ignorant notion of mere worldly expediency, that thereby he was conforming to the ideas of the religion of his father and mother. And the meaning of the apostle in citing the case of Esau is to show how all outward privileges amount to nothing if there is inward profaneness of heart ; that profane apostates have only a limited season wherein the recovery of the gospel blessing is possible ; that sin may be the *occasion* of great sorrow, though there be no *true sorrow* for sin ; that the profane despising of spiritual privileges will, at some time or other, testify in experience to God's severity against all reprobates. S. R.

Esau's great and bitter cry, which at first sight we are disposed to pity, is the cry of one who has rejected God, and God in turn has rejected him. It is the cry of one who has trifled with God's mercies, and then sought to regain them when it was all too late. It is the cry of

one who has not heeded the warning, "See that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." *Newman.*

**39, 40.** *The Blessing of Esau.* As to Isaac, one point only is named of him by the writer to the Hebrews in his catalogue of illustrious examples of faith : "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come" (11 : 20). These benedictions must be regarded as far more than a venerable father's good wishes,—indeed, as nothing less than prophetic benedictions, words uttered under the divine impulses of the Holy Ghost. Their broad outlook embraced the great outlines of the future history of the two nations that were before him in the person of his two sons. H C.

The prophecy thus delivered by Isaac was fulfilled in every particular. At first Esau, the elder, seemed to prosper more than his brother Jacob. There were dukes in Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel (Gen. 36 : 31) ; and while Israel was in bondage in Egypt, Edom was an independent people. E. H. B.——It was Saul who first conquered, and David who subjugated them. They revolted under Joram, and Amaziah defeated them and stormed their citadel Sela. After frequent changes in their political relations to Israel, they spread themselves abroad at the time of the Maccabees over the southern part of Canaan, as far as Hebron. John Hyrcanus completed their subjugation, and forced upon them the rite of circumcision, so that about a century before Christ they formed one people with the Jews. Antipater was an Idumæan, and Herod the Great was his son. At the destruction of Jerusalem, about seventy years after Christ, they accelerated its fall. Since *that* period they have disappeared from history. C. G. B.

**39.** The dwelling of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, was Mt. Seir, on the south side of the Dead Sea, a district stretching to the Ælanitic Gulf of the Red Sea—a rocky district, which is barren toward the north ; but contains even now some fertile mountain country—once flourishing communities. Its chief town was Selah ("a rock" (2 Kings 14 : 7) ; afterward called "Petra," a great town, which gave the name to Arabia Petræa), which has astonished modern travellers by its magnificent ruins. It was destroyed by the Roman Emperor Trajan. In its neighborhood are, even to this day, "the ridges of the mountains covered with corn-fields and fruit-gardens." *Gerl.*

The elder branch, it is here foretold, should delight more in war and violence, but yet should be subdued by the younger. *By thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother.* Esau and his children got possession of Mount Seir by force, expelling from thence the *Horites*, the former inhabitants (De. 2 : 22). They were almost continually at war with the Jews : upon every occasion, they were ready to join with their enemies ; and when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, they encouraged him utterly to destroy the city, saying—*Raze it, raze it even to the foundations thereof* (Psal. 137 : 7). And even long after they were subdued by the Jews, they retained the same martial spirit ; for Josephus in his time gives them the character of "a turbulent and disorderly nation, always erect to commotions, and rejoicing in changes : at the least adulation of those who beseech them, beginning war, and hasting to battles as to a feast." And a little before the last siege of Jerusalem, they came, at the entreaty of the *Zealots*, to assist them against the priests and people ; and there, together with the Zealots, committed unheard-of cruelties, and barbarously murdered *Annas*, the high-priest, from whose death Josephus dates the destruction of the city. They were swallowed up and lost, partly among the Nabathean Arabs and partly among the Jews ; and the very name was disused about the end of the first century of the Christian Era. Thus were they rewarded for insulting and oppressing their brethren the Jews ; and hereby other prophecies were fulfilled, viz. Jerem. 49 : 7 ; Ezek. 25 : 12 ; Joel 3 : 19 ; Amos 1 : 11, and particularly Obadiah : for at this day we see the Jews subsisting as a distinct people, while Edom is no more, agreeably to the words of Obadiah (ver. 10). *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob*, in the return of his posterity from Egypt, *shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever.* And again (ver. 18). *There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau, for the Lord hath spoken it.* In what a most extensive and circumstantial manner has God fulfilled all these predictions ! And what a proof is this of the divine inspiration of the Pentateuch, and the omniscience of God ! *Bp. Newton.*

*Other Suggestive Points of the Narrative.*

Esau shows how selfish and untruthful the sensual man really is, and how worthless is the generosity which is merely of impulse and not bottomed on principle. While he so bitterly blamed Jacob for supplanting him, it might surely have occurred to him that it was really he who was supplanting Jacob. He had no right, divine or human, to the inheritance. God had never said that his possession should

go to the oldest, and had in this case said the express opposite. Besides, inconstant as Esau was, he could scarcely have forgotten the bargain that so pleased him at the time, and by which he had sold to his younger brother all title to his father's blessings. Jacob was to blame for seeking to win his own by craft, but Esau was more to blame for endeavoring furtively to recover what he knew to be no longer his. His bitter cry was the cry of a disappointed and enraged child, what Hosea calls the "howl" of those who seem to seek the Lord, but are really merely crying out, like animals, for corn and wine. Many that care very little for God's love will seek His favors; and every wicked wretch who has in his prosperity spurned God's offers, will, when he sees how he has cheated himself, turn to God's gifts, though not to God, with a cry. Esau would now very gladly have given a mess of pottage for the blessing that secured to its receiver "the dew of heaven, the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine" Like many another sinner, he wanted both to eat his cake and have it. He wanted to spend his youth sowing to the flesh, and have the harvest which those only can have who have sown to the spirit. He wished both of two irreconcilable things—both the red pottage and the birthright. He is a type of those who think very lightly of spiritual blessings while their appetites are strong, but afterward bitterly complain that their whole life is filled with the results of sowing to the flesh and not to the spirit. *Dods.*

Adam and Eve sold their birthright for the fruit of a tree—that was their bargain. Esau sold his for a mess of lentils—that was his. And men nowadays often sell theirs, not indeed for anything so simple as fruits or herbs but for some evil gain, which at the time they think worth purchasing at any price; perhaps for the enjoyment of some particular sin, or more commonly for the indulgence of general carelessness and spiritual sloth, because they do not like a strict life, and have no heart for God's service. And thus they are profane persons, for they despise the great gift of God. And then, when all is done and over, and their souls sold to Satan, they never seem to understand that they have parted with their birthright. They think that they stand just where they did; they take for granted that when they choose to become more decent, or more religious, they have all their privileges just as before. Like Esau, instead of repenting for the loss of the birthright, they come, as a matter of course, for the blessing. *Newman.*

Esau warns us that it is very possible, by careless yielding to appetite and passing whim, to entangle ourselves irrecoverably for this life, if not to weaken and maim ourselves for eternity. At the time, your act may seem a very small and secular one, a mere bargain in the ordinary course, a little transaction such as one would enter into carelessly after the day's work is over, in the quiet of a summer evening or in the midst of the family circle; or it may seem so necessary that you never think of its moral qualities, as little as you question whether you are justified in breathing; but you are warned that if there be in that act a crushing out of spiritual hopes to make way for the free enjoyment of the pleasures of sense—if there be a deliberate preference of the good things of this life to the love of God—if, knowingly, you make light of spiritual blessings, and count them unreal when weighed against obvious worldly advantages—then the consequences of that act will in this life bring to you great discomfort and uneasiness, great loss and vexation, an agony of remorse, and a life-long repentance. You are warned of this, and most touchingly, by the moving entreaties, the bitter cries and tears of Esau.

But even when our life is spoiled irreparably, a hope remains for our character and ourselves—not certainly if our misfortunes embitter us, not if resentment is the chief result of our suffering; but if, subduing resentment, and taking blame to ourselves instead of trying to fix it on others, we take revenge upon the real source of our undoing, and extirpate from our own character the root of bitterness. Painful and difficult is such schooling. It calls for simplicity, and humility, and truthfulness—qualities not of frequent occurrence. It calls for abiding patience; for he who begins thus to sow to the spirit late in life, must be content with inward fruits, with peace of conscience, increase of righteousness and humility, and must learn to live without much of what all men naturally desire. *Dods.*

It is natural to pity Esau; but one has no right to do more. One has no right to fancy for a moment that God was arbitrary or hard upon him. Esau is not the sort of man to be the father of a great nation, or of anything else great. Greedy, passionate, reckless people like him, without due feeling of religion or of the unseen world, are not the men to govern the world or help it forward, or to be of use to mankind, or train up their families in justice and wisdom and piety. *Kingsley.*——When you look at the entire lives of Jacob and Esau, you

find, that while Esau was far better in the beginning, Jacob was far better in the end. There was very good material in Esau's composition, but what did he make of it? He sold his birthright. He turned away from God. Instead of going up, he went down. There was very poor material in Jacob's composition, but he accepted God as his God; and his path, though by no means straight, was nevertheless in the main an upward path. So Jacob grew better and better, and rose higher and higher, until we find him at last a veritable saint, a noble old man, before he dies. Abraham was a hero; Isaac was a saint; but Jacob was a sinner. The biography of Jacob comes closer home to many of us than the history of the others. There are few Abrahams; not a large number of Isaacs; but a great many Jacobs, to whom it is most comforting to know, that however poor stuff we are made of by nature, God can make of us, if only we will yield ourselves to him, "vessels unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." And are there not times in the history of us all when it is a peculiar support to our faith to be able to call on God as "the God of Jacob"? *Gibson.*

A great modern writer, Goethe, who can be accused neither of pietism nor of clericalism, wrote on the patriarchs some magnificent pages, in which occurs the following extract: "In that noble family there appears for the first time, in Jacob, a member who does not shrink from using stratagem and artifice in order to obtain those advantages which nature and circumstances deny him. It has often been observed that the Holy Scriptures in nowise set the patriarchs before us as models of virtue. They are men of most diverse characters, subject to manifold failings and infirmities." "But," adds this prince of modern authors, "there is one fundamental quality which is ever found in those men after God's own heart; that quality is the unshaken belief that God takes special care of them and theirs." That unwavering faith in the faithful and merciful God is the seal by which Jacob is stamped as well as Abraham. It is, therefore, easy to understand why God has chosen him in spite of his many delinquencies. In that heart, beneath the dross, was the noble metal which God requires, that spiritual sense we call faith—the sense which was lacking in the profane Esau. *Godet.*——On the whole, here was a mixed character as to its excellence, but a high character as to its ability. Jacob was, even in his weakest points, far better fitted to lay the foundations of a family and kingdom than the impulsive and purposeless Esau. As a matter of fact, among the patriarchs though Abraham is most revered Jacob has been the truly influential man with the Jewish masses. He has moulded the mass of the Jewish people into his own image. *Mercer.*

The fundamental thought connected with the divine guidance of Jacob's life is, that in spite of all human hindrances, the divine counsel reaches its goal, and that even human sins must serve for its realization, although they are punished none the less. O.——In the whole of this history it is to be observed that God executes his purposes according to his own counsel and will, and renders the weaknesses and sins of the children of men subservient to their accomplishment. The sins themselves he punishes, as he did in Rebekah, Isaac, Esau, and especially Jacob. Amid the confusions and antagonisms of man's weakness and waywardness, his purposes move on. C. G. B.

This is one of the most remarkable complications of life, showing in the clearest manner that a higher hand guides the threads of history, so that neither sin nor error can ultimately entangle them. Each one weaves the threads which are committed to him according to his own views and desires, but at last when the texture is complete we behold in it the pattern which the master had long before devised, and toward which each laborer had only contributed one or another feature. K.——Each member of the family plans his own wicked device, and God by the evil of one defeats the evil of another, and saves His own purpose to bless the race from being frittered away and lost. And it is told us in order that, amid all this mess of human craft and selfishness, the righteousness and stability of God's word of promise may be more vividly seen. *Dods.*

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The Bible is a book rather of examples than of precepts. There is comparatively little teaching of moral lessons in the abstract. What is this but an indication on the part of God that He wills us to meditate upon His Word, and to derive from it for ourselves the lessons implicitly wrapped up in it, without their being always explicitly stated? The narrative itself seldom or ever develops those lessons; no comments are made, as a general rule, upon the conduct of the characters which are brought before us; we are left to gather the moral for ourselves, either from the results of the conduct, or from principles laid down in another part of the Sacred Volume. Thus, God's abhorrence of

Jacob's deceit and falsehood is not stated expressly in the narrative, but left to be gathered from the after fortunes of the Patriarch, whose latter years only were gilded with some gleam of comfort,—who may be said to have paid a life-long penalty of his sin. All these lessons it asks some mental effort to elicit. It is, however, an effort which repays itself. It is far more interesting—it gives far more of life and freshness to a maxim of duty—to derive it for ourselves from an example, than to have it presented to us in a dry and abstract form. E. M. G.

## Section 56.

### ESAU'S THREAT. JACOB BLESSED AND SENT TO LABAN.

GENESIS 27 : 41–46 ; 28 : 1–9.

27 : 41 AND Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him : and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand ; then will I slay
42 my brother Jacob. And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah ; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as
43 touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey
44 my voice ; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran ; and tarry with him a few
45 days, until thy brother's fury turn away ; until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him : then I will send, and fetch thee from thence : why should I be bereaved of you both in one day ?
46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth ; if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me ?
28 : 1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou
2 shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father ; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of
3 Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and
4 multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples ; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee ; that thou mayest inherit the land of thy
5 sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob ; and he went to Paddan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and
6 Esau's mother. Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram, to take him a wife from thence ; and that as he blessed him he gave him a
7 charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan ; and that Jacob
8 obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Paddan-aram : and Esau saw that the
9 daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father ; and Esau went unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife.

**41.** As Esau was well aware of Isaac's partiality toward himself, he must have been convinced that it was not owing to him, nor to Jacob's fraud, but *to the Lord's doing*, that the actual result had been brought about. Hence it appears that his hatred was of the same nature with that of Cain toward Abel, and of Saul toward David, being directed against him principally on account of his having been a special object of the divine favor. Under these circumstances to attempt to take Jacob's life was virtually an attempt to frustrate the decree of God by a stroke of his sword! *Bush.*——He thought not of the hand of God in the whole matter, and just as little of condemning himself, acknowledging his guilt, and repenting. Thus nothing remained to him—as nothing does remain to any natural heart, unbroken by grace—but hatred and enmity. And Rebekah and Jacob came now to experience, as just retribution, the consequences of the mistakes and errors with which they sought to anticipate the counsel of the Most High. C. G. B.

**44.** By the words ' a few days" Rebekah per-

suades her son to tear himself from home. The punishment of the fraud is beginning. She never saw him again. *Alf.*——Rebekah in her scheming neglected to take account of Laban, a man true brother to herself in cunning. She had calculated on Esau's resentment, and knew it would last only a few days, and this brief period she was prepared to utilize by sending Jacob out of Esau's reach to her own kith and kin, from among whom he might get a suitable wife. But she did not reckon on Laban's making her son serve fourteen years for his wife, nor upon Jacob's falling so deeply in love with Rachel as to make him apparently forget his mother. *Dods.*

**46.** She is afraid, or pretends to be afraid, that her son Jacob may marry among the *Hittites*, as Esau had done ; and therefore makes this to Isaac the *ostensible reason* why Jacob should immediately go to Paddan-aram, that he might get a wife there. Isaac readily falls in with Rebekah's proposal, and immediately calls Jacob, gives him suitable directions and his blessing, and sends him away. In this view of the subject we see at once the reason of the abrupt speech contained in this verse. A. C.

**28 : 1-5. Blessed him and said, Arise, go.** Too keenly does Isaac feel the grief which Esau's Canaanitish wives had caused him, not at once and cordially to have seconded such a proposal ; the more so as he has now perceived that in many respects he had been unjust to Jacob, and has learned to regard him as the person in whom the promised race is to be continued. As formerly unconsciously and in prophetic emotion, so now consciously and of set purpose he transfers the blessing of Abraham to the son whom he had neglected, and sends him away with the injunction not to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. K.

**4.** A little reflection will show that, after all his errors in the matter, Isaac did " by faith" bless his sons. Manifestly, Isaac had been very early in life initiated into the sublime mysteries of that faith which his father professed. The transaction on Mt. Moriah shows his full acquiescence in the terms of the covenant made with Abraham. All the circumstances of his marriage—his patient delay on account of the scruples of his father—his acquiescence in the perilous venture in sending among strangers for a wife—his prayer of faith for the fulfilment of the promise after it was delayed twenty years—show very clearly that he was a man of faith and had a vivid apprehension of his high calling, and that therefore, even though the feebleness and seeming childishness of his old age led him into error as to the mode of executing the duty which faith taught him was incumbent upon him, still the power of his faith shows itself in his purpose to transmit the sacred deposit which he had received from Abraham. S. R.

As the blessing now pronounced on Jacob was obtained without any deception on his part, it is likely that it produced a salutary effect upon his mind, might have led him to confession of his sin, and prepared his heart for those discoveries of God's goodness with which he was favored at Bethel. A. C.

Now *Jacob fled into Syria* (Hos. 12 : 12). He was blessed with plenty of corn and wine, and yet he goes away poor ; was blessed with government, and yet goes out to service, a hard service. The blessing shall be confirmed to him, and yet he shall smart for the indirect course he takes to obtain it. While there is such an allay as there is of sin in our duties, we must expect an allay of trouble in our comforts. H.——Isaac's life was not more retired and quiet than Jacob's was busy and troublesome. In the one I see the image of contemplation ; of action, in the other. None of the patriarchs saw so evil days as he ; from whom justly hath the church of God therefore taken her name. Neither were the faithful ever since called Abrahamites, but Israelites. *Bp. H.*

**6-9.** *Esau's third marriage.* This proceeding of Esau shows the same characteristic misapprehension of the position, and of his father's mind, as we have seen in him before. It fulfils that mind to the letter, but violates it in the spirit. There is, again, no inconsistency with what has gone before, as some have thought. Esau need not have known that his mother had heard of his threat against his brother : he sees his brother's dismissal to Haran, and its ostensible reason. He knows that his wives were displeasing to his father ; and he endeavors in his clumsy way to repair the mischief. *Alf.*

True to his character, Esau manifests, on one hand, a kindness of disposition in consulting the wishes of his parents ; on the other hand, even more, a certain wilfulness which is determined to get back outwardly the inheritance which he has forfeited and despised, together with the blind infatuation of unbelief, which prompts him to marry among the daughters of Ishmael, who in character were congenial to himself. He is the image of a man who is determined to correct his false steps by his own strength ; and, accordingly, attempts it in a wrong temper. *Gerl.*——We are expressly told

that Esau went unto Ishmael. There was a kindredness of condition, probably of taste and habits, between the father and son-in-law. Both were rejected offshoots from the direct line which led downward to the birth of Christ; and we can well imagine a community of feeling between them toward the preferred and favored branch of the house from which they sprung. T. C.

Esau does not see any difference between Ishmael's family and the chosen family; they are both sprung from Abraham, both are naturally the same, and the fact that God expressly gave His inheritance past Ishmael is nothing to Esau —an act of *God* has no meaning to him. He merely sees that he has not pleased his parents as well as he might by his marriage, and his easy disposition prompts him to remedy this. This is a fine specimen of the hazy views men have of what will bring them to a level with God's chosen. Through their crass insensibility to the high righteousness of God, there still does penetrate a perception that if they are to please Him there are certain means to be used for doing so. There are, they see, certain occupations and ways pursued by Christians, and if by themselves adopting these they can please God, they are quite willing to humor Him in this. Much commoner than hypocrisy is the dim-sighted, blundering stupidity of the really profane worldly man, who thinks he can take rank with men whose natures God has changed, by the mere imitation of some of their ways; who thinks, that as he cannot without great labor, and without too seriously endangering his hold on the world, do precisely what God requires, God may be expected to be satisfied with a something like it. *Dods.*

Thus by his own choice as well as in the development of history, Esau is removed from *connection with the history of the covenant.* His communion with the chosen family had always been only external. He had always been, and he remained a stranger to its higher interests, to its calling and destiny. *He went his own ways*, and that even while he remained in his father's house, and was yet invested with the outward and natural claims to be the head of his family. His total exclusion from the chosen family is only the completing of his former tendency. But, like Lot and Ishmael, he thereby becomes really a heathen. From the first, and even before we have studied the life of Jacob, we can fully understand the choice of Jacob and the rejection of Esau. K.——Any one capable of deeper views will certainly not dream that Esau would have been better adapted than Jacob to become the medium of Divine revelations. Esau is the representative of natural kindliness and honesty, but these qualities are joined to rudeness and to a want of susceptibility for what is higher. He is void of all anticipation and longing. He is satisfied with what is visible; in short he is a "profane person." Such persons, even if grace reaches their hearts, which was not the case with Esau, are not adapted for heading a religious development. The natural disposition of Jacob is much more complex than that of Esau. There are many folds and corners in his heart, which himself and others find it difficult thoroughly to examine, while a man like Esau may be pretty well known in the course of an hour. Jacob is mild and pliable, sensitive and susceptible for every contact with a higher world; always disposed and ready to see the heavens opened and the angels ascending and descending. But at the same time, as in all characters in whom the imaginative prevails, he is also apt to deceive himself, he is under strong temptation to dishonesty, prone to cunning, and without sufficient openness. God took this man into his own training, to remove the many shadows always found when there is much light. Under this training alone is it possible really to learn, and in that school Jacob became Israel, while Esau, who was incapable of any such training, remained to the end only Esau. *Hengstenberg.*

Taking the two, Esau and Jacob, from first to last, how entirely is the judgment of Scripture and the judgment of posterity confirmed by the result of the whole. The mere impulsive hunter vanishes away, light as air: "he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright." The substance, the strength of the Chosen family, the true inheritance of the promise of Abraham, was interwoven with the very essence of the character of "the plain man, dwelling in tents," steady, persevering, moving onward with deliberate settled purpose, through years of suffering and of prosperity, of exile and return, of bereavement and recovery. The birthright is always before him. Rachel is won from Laban by hard service, "and the seven years seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her." Isaac, and Rebekah, and Rebekah's nurse, are remembered with a faithful, filial remembrance; Joseph and Benjamin are long and passionately loved with a more than parental affection,—bringing down his gray hairs for their sakes "in sorrow to the grave." This is no character to be contemned or scoffed at;

if it was encompassed with much infirmity, yet its very complexity demands our reverent attention ; in it are bound up, as his double name expresses, not one man, but two ; by toil and struggle, Jacob, the Supplanter, is gradually transformed into Israel, the Prince of God ; the harsher and baser features are softened and purified away. A. P. S.

After this event, Isaac lived other forty-three years. But he no more appears on the stage of covenant history, as Jacob takes up the thread of further development, the promise having now devolved on him. The text only records that he was gathered to his fathers when 180 years old and full of days, and that he was buried in the cave of Machpelah by Esau and Jacob, whom he was privileged to see once more standing as reconciled brothers by his deathbed. When Jacob left, his father dwelt at Beersheba. The desire to be nearer to his paternal place of sepulchre may probably have been the ground of his later settlement in Mamre, where he died. Rebekah, who at parting had so confidently promised Jacob to let him know whenever Esau's anger was appeased, had probably died soon after her favorite had left. At least the promised message was never delivered, nor is her name mentioned on Jacob's return. K.

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It has been common to describe Abraham as the man of *faith*, Isaac as the model of *patient bearing*, and Jacob as the man of *active working ;* and in the two latter cases to connect the spiritual fruits, which were the outcome of their faith, with their natural characters also. All this is quite correct ; but it is necessary to take a broader view of the whole matter. Let it be borne in mind, that God had both made and established His covenant with Abraham. The history of Isaac and Jacob, on the other hand, rather represents *the hindrances to the covenant.* These are just the same as we daily meet in our own walk of faith. They arise from opposite causes, according as in our weakness we either lag behind, or in our haste go before God. Isaac lagged behind, Jacob tried to go before God ; and their history exhibits the dangers and difficulties arising from each of these causes, just as, on the other hand, God's dealings with them show how mercifully, how wisely, and yet how holily He knew how to remove these hindrances out of the way, and to uproot these sins from their hearts and lives. A. E.

Neither of the Patriarchs has been set up, or can be set up, as a genuine pattern of *Christian* morals. But the broad light in which the Fathers of Israel are to be viewed is this, that they were exclusive worshippers of the One True Everlasting God, in a world of idolaters—that they were living depositaries of the great doctrine of the Unity of the Godhead, when the nations around were resorting to every green tree—that they " were faithful found among the faithless." And so incalculably important was the preservation of this great Article of the Creed of man, at a time when it rested in the keeping of so few, that the language of the Almighty in the Law seems ever to have a respect unto it : fury, anger, indignation, jealousy, hatred, being expressions rarely, if ever, attributed to him, except in reference to idolatry—and, on the other hand, enemies of God, adversaries of God, haters of God, being there—chiefly and above all, idolaters. But in this sense God was emphatically the *God* of Abraham, the *God* of Isaac, and the *God* of Jacob : none of them, not even the last, having ever forfeited their claim to this high and glorious title. *Blunt.*

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# Section 57.

## JACOB'S VISION AT BETHEL.

Genesis 28 : 10–22.

10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a
11 certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set ; and he took one of the
12 stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven : and
13 behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood

above it, and said, I am the LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the
14 land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the
dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north,
and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee withersoever thou goest, and will bring thee
again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to
16 thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place;
17 and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none
18 other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the
morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and
19 poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name
20 of the city was Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me,
and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,
21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the LORD be my God, and this
22 stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give
me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

The blessing of his sons was the last passage in the active life of Isaac, after which he retires from the scene. Jacob now becomes the leading figure in the sacred history. His spiritual character has not yet come out to view. But even now we can discern the general distinction in the lives of the three patriarchs. Abraham's is a life of authority and decision; Isaac's, of submission and acquiescence; and Jacob's, of trial and struggle. M.

**1-22.** That this is really an account of the conversion of Jacob we infer not only from the circumstances of the case but from the beautiful saying of the prophet Hosea: "He found him in Bethel and then he spake with us." In this view of the vision at Bethel, we may see the very great importance of just such an interposition of God at that period of the church's history. The earthly head of the church, Isaac, is now aged, blind and feeble. The true heir to the succession is a fugitive and a wanderer, and it is needful to put beyond all uncertainty the question of his appointment of God to the leadership, even though like David afterward he must still struggle on and wait long till the purpose of God respecting him is fully accomplished. Here again is illustrated the principle of these supernatural interpositions as never occurring except when the occasion is of a dignity worthy the interposition of God. This is the point by which the supernatural interpositions of the Scriptures are readily distinguished from all the legendary interpositions of supernatural power as recorded in the mythologies of paganism, and scarcely less superstitious mythologies of a corrupt Christianity. S. R.

**10, 11.** With a staff he goes over Jordan alone, doubtful and comfortless, not like the son of Isaac: in the way the earth is his bed, and the stone his pillow; yet even there he sees a vision of angels. Jacob's heart was never so full of joy as when his head lay hardest. God is most present with us in our greatest dejection, and loves to give comfort to those that are forsaken of their hopes. *Bp. II.*

**12.** All that was revealed to Jacob was that there was a ladder—a way to heaven, however steep and narrow. To us it has been shown who the way is. Lifting up our eyes we see the Lord standing looking upon us in love and hear him speaking to us. *Davidson.*——What Jacob felt in his dream was, that this world is no such obstruction between spirits, no such hindrance to the wishes of our hearts, as we creatures of sense foolishly feel. He dreamed that that was true which Christ taught plainly was truth: that the Son of man standing on earth was yet in heaven; that streams of power, intelligence, sympathy, streams of radiant pity, of ministering love and wisdom, run down upon us, and, lifting our hearts with them, run up again to God. In the most beautiful form poet ever imagined, Jacob saw that he the exile was always at home; that the child-man, through all distance, through all obstructions, is heart to heart with God. What a deep truth is here! *Mercer.*

Christ has come, and in Him the heavens have bended down to touch, and touching to bless, this low earth, and man and God are at one once more. He is the ladder or sole medium of communication, inasmuch as by Him all Divine blessings, grace, helps and favors come down, angel-like, into our weak and needy hearts. Every strength, every mercy, every spiritual power, consolation in every sorrow, fitness for duty, illumination in darkness, all that any of us can need; it all comes to us down that one shining way, the mediation and the work of the Divine-Human Christ, the Lord.

He is the ladder, the sole medium of communication between heaven and earth, inasmuch as by him my poor desires and prayers and intercessions, my wishes, my conflicts, my confessions rise to God. "No man cometh to the Father but by me." He is the ladder, the means of all communication between heaven and earth, inasmuch as at the last, if ever we enter there at all, we shall enter through him and through him alone. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." A. M.

Out of his eternal and infinite goodness and love purposing to become a Creator, and to communicate to his creatures, the Deity ordained in his eternal counsel, that one person of the Godhead should be united to one nature, and to one particular of his creatures : that so, in the person of the Mediator, the true ladder might be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures might ascend to God. *Bacon.*

To this ancient patriarch in Bethel is revealed the wondrous fact that the infinite ocean of space between earth and heaven, which no genius of man could bridge over into any sort of a pathway, has really been bridged over. For what Jacob saw in his dream Jesus Christ has done. A stairway—"a king's highway of holiness"—springing from the great continent of heaven spans the impassable gulf, and is securely fastened to earth. So that on it are passing spiritual messengers innumerable in execution of the plans of God for every intelligent creature. Yea, and up that highway redeemed souls are ever passing, till "thousands of thousands and ten times thousands" of earth's inhabitants are gathered there. Yes, Jesus, the Mediator, is the Way. S. R.——The Ladder whose top reached to Heaven while its base rested on the earth, is the Son of Man who was also the Son of God, "the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man." Was ever figure more appropriate or more instructive? The fundamental lesson which it teaches is this—that the Incarnation of the Son of God is the foundation of all our hopes ; that independently of this great fact, that "the Word was made flesh," it is an idle mockery to speak of any hope for man. For in the communion of the human soul with its Creator is to be found man's true happiness,—his chief good, apart from which no real satisfaction is to be had. But this communion was broken off entirely by the Fall ; sin made a natural separation between the sinner and a holy God. How shall it be restored? How shall we again climb up to the house from which we have become outcasts—the bosom of "our Father which is in heaven"? The access to Him which you could not by any resources in yourself obtain, He has provided for you in Christ. "Behold a ladder set up on the earth." Christ appeared a man among men upon the earth, and was known after the flesh by the men of His time. In His body, in His spirit, in His circumstances, in His lot, in His trials, in His temptations, He was perfectly human, albeit perfectly sinless. He owned human relationships and human ties, and was subject to all the innocent infirmities of our nature. But those who associated with Him daily, who watched His ways, and treasured up His words, soon became aware of something more than human in Him, which manifested itself as by lightning flashes, while they studied His career. The Ladder might be set up on earth, but its top reached they knew not whither,—"reached," as they soon discovered, "to Heaven." After His earthly pilgrimage had closed, Thomas cried to Him, under the force of irrepressible convictions, "My Lord and my God ;" and the first martyr, Stephen, saw with his bodily eye the Ladder's head resting in Heaven, and cried, in brave acknowledgment of the great verity, "Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." *Goulburn.*

In an age of the future so far away that his thought can grasp no clear conception of it,—when the sinful and sorrowing race of men shall have learnt, by long trying and by many tears, how little it can do of itself, when the bad choice of the first pair has borne bad fruit enough, and when the time appointed of the Father is fully come,—then a descendant of this Jacob shall be born, of such a new and universal power of life to save men, that in Him all the nations of the earth shall be everlastingly blessed. This was the magnificent truth sent down through that Eastern midnight sky into the shepherd's mind. This Son of Man has come. At the very beginning of His course, standing on the threshold of His kingdom, when He as yet discovers His real divinity to only a few open-minded and clean-hearted men like Nathanael,—an Israelite in whom there is no guile,—He is careful to say, "Hereafter ye shall *see* heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." That deeper sense, which the deeper readers like Origen and Augustine, and Luther and Tholuck, have never failed to recognize, is this. Our Lord's coming into the world flings forever apart the folded gates of the invisible. It throws the two worlds open into each other.

It is the very *reality* which the ladder Jacob saw long before in Syria, with the condescending and climbing angels on it, typifies and prefigures. From the moment of Christ's baptism, the outset of His sacrificial and saving ministry, all the bars and partition-walls, and to the eye of faith even the veils of the holy place, are taken out of the way. A train of spiritual glories is from that hour set in motion, which will go on breaking and brightening over the earth, in gifts of the Spirit, in the awaking of love and trust in human hearts, in righteous conduct, and in the gathering of nations about His cross, which will have their consummation and crown only when He comes again with His saints. This is your Christian privilege, you who believe and follow the Lord. Because He lives, ye live also. No matter if, like the patriarch, you have to take the stones of that place where you are,—hard and cold,—and lay them for your pillow,—behold, the pathway of light opens up none the less. The angels travel it both ways: they come down bringing God's help, as well as go up with the burden of your prayers. F. D. H.

**13. The LORD stood above it, and said.** He had just committed a great offence; his flight from home, his personal loneliness, his fears about the future, all the consequences of this transgression, the burden of care that his condition brought with it, were all incalculably enhanced by that heavier burden that an awakened conscience presses down upon his heart. Never before had the Lord appeared to him, never before had that voice divine sounded in his ear. Jehovah now meets him by the way, as he comes fresh from his transgression, and meets him how? Is it as he met the prophet in his flight, saying, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Is it as he met Moses, after his offence, indicating his sore displeasure? No, not a word of challenge, not a hint as to the past, not an expression of displeasure. It is thus that the God of his fathers deals with his adopted child, become now humbled and penitent, depressed, doubtful even of Divine forgiveness, still more of Divine protection and favor. W. H.

Heaven and earth have been separated by sin. But this ladder has re-established the intercourse. It is therefore a beautiful emblem of that which mediates and reconciles. It here serves to bring Jacob into communication with God, and teaches him the emphatic lesson that he is accepted through a mediator. *Jehovah stood above it*, and Jacob, the object of his mercy, beneath. He reveals himself to the sleeper as *Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and of Isaac.* It is remarkable that Abraham is styled his father, that is, his actual grandfather, and covenant father. He renews the promise of the land, of the seed, and of the blessing in that seed for the whole race of man. Westward, eastward, northward, and southward are they to break forth. This expression points to the world-wide universality of the kingdom of the seed of Abraham, when it shall become the fifth monarchy, that shall subdue all that went before, and endure forever. This transcends the destiny of the natural seed of Abraham. M. ——A new sense of communication between earth and heaven came upon him, assuming a strange reality when he saw the Lord standing above, and heard him say, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac." Before this Jacob had heard of that wonderful covenant of God so often ratified with his venerable grandfather and his father. The transfer of blessing from Isaac to himself as the lineal heir of both birthright and blessing was a thing of quite recent experience. How fully he had comprehended its glorious significance before does not appear; but now that he is cast out alone upon the wide, unknown world—now that he so much needs the Great God for his friend —it comes over him with solemn, precious interest. The words spoken were full of comfort. They reminded him of the great family promise to Abraham, renewed to his father Isaac: "A God to thee and *to thy seed after thee*," and he felt that the promise put its finger upon his own aching, solitary heart. He had a fresh assurance that his life would not come to nought and be a failure. H. C.

**12–15.** The dream of Jacob is the medium of divine revelation and promise. But the inward state of Jacob at the time formed its natural basis. This dream appears much more significant when we recall to mind the feelings with which he would lay him down to rest. Thoughts accusing and excusing one another would overwhelm him and refuse to be controlled, amid the unwonted solitude and in the loneliness of his position, as night gathered around him, and all circumstances conspired to make him look into the depth of his soul. The present weighs on him as a curse which he had drawn on himself; nor is the dark future before him as yet lit up by a single ray of divine promise. He has, indeed, obtained the blessing of his father, but the divine sanction has not been given to it. Consciousness of guilt, remorse of conscience, doubts, cares, and anxieties of various kinds, only tended to deepen his

sense of loneliness. If he is not to despair, he requires to be comforted and strengthened from on high. And this is now done. The dream and its vision are the reply of God to the cares and anxieties with which he has lain down to rest. The *vision* embodies in a symbol that which the divine promises (verses 13 to 15), of which it is the basis, declare in words. It forms a bridge between heaven and earth. Below, is the poor, helpless, and forsaken man—a representative of human nature with its inability and helplessness. But the angels of God ever descend to bring him help, and again ever ascend to fetch new deliverance. Above, Jehovah Himself stands upon it. By the promise, "I will bless *thee*, and *in thee* (and in thy seed) shall all the families of the earth be blessed," he connects the *goal* with the *commencement* of *that* development, so that this forsaken and helpless man is to become the source of blessing and the medium of salvation to the whole world. It is thus that the ladder connects *heaven with earth*, and *Jacob* at the foot of it with *Jehovah* above it. The ladder which connects heaven with earth represents the *promise*, which equally joins heaven and earth, which brings down and imparts the powers of heaven to man, as the medium of the promise, yea, and in virtue of which, Jehovah Himself comes down in order that by His covenant and co-operation with him who is the medium of the promise, the goal might be attained and all the families of the earth blessed *in him*. All this, so far as Jacob was concerned, lay only in germ and undeveloped in the promise. But looking back on its fulfilment *we* know that this goal was to be attained by the descent of the fulness of the personal God into helpless and disabled human nature, through the incarnation of God in Christ. K.

The Lord expounds, as it were, this vision to him, and makes a particular application to him of the truth it shadows forth. He speaks as though that ladder were placed between heaven and earth for his sake only ; as though it were for him only that he kept watch above it. "Behold," he says, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. I will not leave thee." And thus the Lord reveals to us what we call his particular providence over his servants. Wherever we are, he declares that he sees us ; he tells us he is with us ; he assures us he cares for us ; he pledges himself to keep us. *Bradley.*——Why should we not, as the spiritual seed of Jacob, catch a gleam of refreshing light from this assurance as we pass along? If God will be with *us*, if he will keep us in all places and circumstances, if he will never leave us nor forsake us, and if he will bring us at last to our promised and hoped-for land of rest, then may we go on our way with confidence and joy. Whoever we may leave, or whatever we may lose, still we part not from our best friend, nor are we deprived of our most valuable portion. We cannot be lonely, if God be with us. We cannot want, if he provide for us. We cannot err, if he guide us. We cannot perish, if he preserve us. And all this he *will* do for those that put their trust in him. *Bush.*——And what Jacob heard, that he also saw in symbolic vision. The *promise* was the real God-built stair, which reached from the lonely place on which the poor wanderer lay quite up to heaven, right into the very presence of Jehovah ; and on which, all silent and unknown by the world, lay the shining track of angel-ministry. And so still to each one who is truly of Israel is the promise of that mysterious "ladder" which connects earth with heaven. Below lies poor, helpless, forsaken man ; above, stands Jehovah Himself, and upon the ladder of promise which joins earth to heaven, the angels of God, in their silent, never-ceasing ministry, descend bringing help, and ascend, as to fetch new deliverance. Nay, this "ladder" is Christ, for by this "ladder" God Himself has come down to us in the person of His dear Son, Who is the promise become reality, as it is written : "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." A. E.

**16. And Jacob awaked, and said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not.** He had been reared in the faith that God was to be worshipped in definite localities. At the place where he did not expect anything he saw heaven ; he saw some form or revelation of God. See how the greater truth dawns upon his opening mind, "Surely the Lord is in this place," and that is the very end of our spiritual education ; to find God everywhere ; never to see the days whitening the eastern sky without seeing the coming of the King's brightness ; to feel that every place is praying ground ; to renounce the idea of partial and official consecration, and stand in a universe every particle of which is blessed and consecrated by the presence of the infinite Creator. We have not yet attained this summit of education. We still draw a line between the Sabbath day and the day that went before it ; we have still a church and a market-place ; still we distribute the sum total of things into

Church and State. When God has wrought in us all the mystery of his grace, and reared us to the last fruition of wisdom possible below the skies, we shall know that there is no market-place, no State, no business, but one great Church ; every speech holy and pure as prayer, every transaction a revelation of justice. *J. P.*

**17. And Jacob was afraid.** The Holy Spirit tells us only of Jacob's fear. And why? To impress this truth on our minds, that the man who sees God, never trifles with him ; that the soul he visits and gladdens with his mercy, he always fills with án awe of his majesty. Turn in this book to any manifestation of him you can find here—with hardly an exception, the man to whom it is made, trembles before him. But it is a fear that has no torment in it. Nothing painful gives birth to it. It springs from the nearness to us of the God who loves us ; from the view we have of the power that blesses us ; from the sight vouchsafed us of the holiness that bears with us ; from the vastness we see, the length and breadth and depth and height, in the grace that saves us. Our fear comes not from the terrors of the Lord, but from the excellency of the Lord shining forth in the goodness of the Lord. It springs from the magnificence of that goodness. There is forgiveness with him, he tells us, that he may be feared ; and we feel it must be so. *Bradley.*

**This is none other than the gate of Heaven.** Then he was enabled to look on into a far distant future ; to feel that he should be interested in that which happened long after he left the earth ; that he should live because his God was not the God of the dead, but of the living ; that the blessings to his distant seed would be blessings to him. Here was the real difference between him and Esau. *He* had no feeling of a present, of a living *God ;* therefore he was content with a mere present *possession*, with plenty of corn and wine and fatness of the earth. In time, no doubt, he and his posterity would feel their need of Beings to worship, of beings to protect them. They would form their gods out of the visible things in which they lived. Earth would become the archetype of Heaven, and therefore all their belief in Heaven would be something to make them more afraid of the earth, less able to till it and subdue it, less able to redeem it from the weeds and the beasts that possessed it. This is the last and highest result of the tribe of hunters, of those who seemed as if they held the earth in fee and had an undisputed right to the property of it. The wanderer in the desert, the plain man,—whose ignorance and cowardice and meanness were purged away by God's discipline, who lived in a land which was not his own, and died an exile,—left a family out of which there grew a nation, which was itself to give birth to a universal church ; which was to possess and conquer and civilize a world. *Maurice.*

It is the Son of Man who really bridges the interval between heaven and earth, God and man. In His person these two are united. You cannot tell whether Christ is more divine or human, more God or man—solidly based on earth, as this massive staircase, by His real humanity, by His thirty three years' engagement in all human functions and all experiences of this life, He is yet familiar with eternity, His name is "He that came down from heaven," and if your eye follow step by step to the heights of His person, it rests at last on what you recognize as Divine. His love it is that is wide enough to embrace God on the one hand, and the lowest sinner on the other. Truly He is the way, the stair, leading from the lowest depth of earth to the highest height of heaven. In Him you find a love that embraces you as you are, in whatever condition, however cast down and defeated, however embittered and polluted—a love that stoops tenderly to you and hopefully, and gives you once more a hold upon holiness and life, and in that very love unfolds to you the highest glory of heaven and of God.

When this comes home to a man in the hour of his need, it becomes the most arousing revelation. He springs from the troubled slumber we call life, and all earth wears a new glory and awe to him. He exclaims with Jacob, "How dreadful is this place. Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." The world that had been so bleak and empty to him, is filled with a majestic vital presence. Jacob is no longer a mere fugitive from the results of his own sin, a shepherd in search of employment, a man setting out in the world to try his fortune ; he is the partner with God in the fulfilment of a Divine purpose. And such is the change that passes on every man who believes in the Incarnation, who feels himself to be connected with God by Jesus Christ ; he recognizes the Divine intention to uplift his life, and to fill it with new hopes and purposes. He feels that humanity is consecrated by the entrance of the Son of God into it : he feels that all human life is holy ground since the Lord Himself has passed through it. Having once had this vision of God and man united in Christ, life cannot any more be to him the poor, dreary, commonplace, wretched round of secular duties and

short-lived joys and terribly punished sins, it was before : but it truly becomes the very gate of heaven ; from each part of it he knows there is a staircase rising to the presence of God, and that out of the region of pure holiness and justice there flow to him heavenly aids, tender guidance, and encouragement. *Dods.*

**18.** Jacob dedicates the stone on which his head had rested, and converts it into a *pillar* or *monument* by *pouring oil on the top of it.* The outward import of this action is to distinguish the stone, with a view to the time when in virtue of the vow it was to become a house of God (v. 22). But in accordance with the views prevalent throughout the whole Old Testament, this action must also, and pre-eminently, have had an inward and symbolical meaning. The symbolical use of oil as an emblem of the Spirit of God, who enlightens, revives, and heals, is derived from the use of oil in common life among Orientals. In the East it is employed for giving flexibility, freshness, and health, for alleviating pain and healing diseases, for giving a flavor to food, and also for light. Hence to pour oil over anything symbolized its dedication to God and to Divine purposes. K.

**20–22.** The amended translation of Jacob's vow reads thus : "If Elohim will be with me, and will protect me on this journey that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, and if I come again in peace to my father's house, and Jehovah will be my Elohim, then this stone which I have set up as a pillar shall be Beth-Elohim ; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely pay thee tithes." We have all said so, and some of us have never fulfilled the vow. We rose up from the bed of sickness, and said, "Hence on, every pulse is God's, every breath a prayer." We have been delivered from danger, from poverty, from despair, and we have written our vow, and have forgotten every word of the covenant. J. P.

To what extent Christians of the present day may expect the guidance of God in the affairs of life is a practical question of the highest interest to every earnest-minded man ; and the answer to it involves the sublimest fact in religion. Of old, Jacob tested God on the plains of Bethel, in this very respect, asking "God to be with him, and keep him in the way he went, give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that he might come again to his father's house in peace," and God heard the prayer in all these particulars, and thus took to himself the name of "the God of Bethel" In like manner, that ancient name, "God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," is the memorial of his special watch and care over his children. The life of the Patriarchal religion was this, that God does by his providence shield and guide his people, that he condescends to point out the way they should take. *Budington.*

The conditions of Jacob's vow, which are simply responsive to God's promise (v. 15), seem to denote the secret wish and desire of his soul, and not any express stipulation with God. Man certainly cannot insist on terms with his Maker ; but he may desire and humbly hope for a supply of his wants. More than this the Patriarch did not expect ; and less than this God never intended to give.

**22. Tenth.** The number ten, as being the last of the cardinal numbers, expresses the idea of perfection, of a whole. Among almost all ancient people the tenth of their goods was set apart, and very frequently as a holy offering. This was an acknowledgment that the whole was God's property ; and by this acknowledgment the possession and enjoyment of the rest are sanctified. *Gerl.*——Thus Jacob opens his heart, his home, and his treasure to God. The spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, has begun to reign in Jacob. As the Father is prominently manifested in regenerate Abraham, and the Son in Isaac, so also the Spirit in Jacob. M.

There is clear evidence that Jacob was now a child of God. He takes God to be his God in covenant, with whom he will live. He goes out in reliance upon the divine promise, and yields himself to the divine control. *Gosman.* ——The sense of the nearness of God filled him with awe, incited him to adoration, pledged him to gratitude. Marking the spot with a memorial-stone, and consecrating it with a vow, he went on his way rejoicing. That place is ever nearest heaven where God's presence is felt ; and God's presence is felt wherever the soul looks up to him in humble, grateful, admiring love. J. P. T.

## Section 58.

### JACOB'S SERVICE WITH LABAN. WIVES AND CHILDREN. SCHEME OF INCREASE.

GENESIS 29 : 1–35 ; 30 : 1–43.

29 : 1 THEN Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. And
2 he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it ;
for out of that well they watered the flocks : and the stone upon the well's mouth was great.
3 And thither were all the flocks gathered : and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth,
4 and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place. And
Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we.
5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.
6 And he said unto them, Is it well with him? And they said, It is well : and, behold,
7 Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither
is it time that the cattle should be gathered together : water ye the sheep, and go and feed
8 them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll
9 the stone from the well's mouth ; then we water the sheep. While he yet spake with
10 them, Rachel came with her father's sheep ; for she kept them. And it came to pass,
when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of
Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's
11 mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel,
12 and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother,
13 and that he was Rebekah's son : and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass,
when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and em-
braced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these
14 things. And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode
15 with him the space of a month. And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother,
16 shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be? And
Laban had two daughters : the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger
17 was Rachel. And Leah's eyes were tender ; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored.
18 And Jacob loved Rachel ; and he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger
19 daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her
20 to another man : abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel ; and they
21 seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. And Jacob said unto Laban,
22 Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. And Laban gath-
23 ered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the even-
ing, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him ; and he went in unto her.
24 And Laban gave Zilpah his handmaid unto his daughter Leah for an handmaid. And it
25 came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah : and he said to Laban, What is
this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast
26 thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It is not so done in our place, to give the younger
27 before the firstborn. Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for
28 the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and
29 fulfilled her week : and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. And Laban gave to
30 Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her handmaid. And he went in also unto
Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other
years.
31 And the LORD saw that Leah was hated, and he opened her womb : but Rachel was bar-
32 ren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben : for she said,
33 Because the LORD hath looked upon my affliction ; for now my husband will love me. And
she conceived again, and bare a son ; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I am
34 hated, he hath therefore given me this *son* also : and she called his name Simeon. And
she conceived again, and bare a son ; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined

35 unto me, because I have borne him three sons : therefore was his name called Levi. And she conceived again, and bare a son : and she said, This time will I praise the LORD : therefore she called his name Judah ; and she left bearing.

30 : 1 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister ; and
2 she said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel : and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit
3 of the womb ? And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her ; that she may bear
4 upon my knees, and I also may obtain children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her
5 handmaid to wife : and Jacob went in unto her. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a
6 son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath
7 given me a son : therefore called she his name Dan. And Bilhah Rachel's handmaid con-
8 ceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With mighty wrestlings have
9 I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed : and she called his name Naphtali. When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her handmaid, and gave her to Jacob
10 to wife. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, Fortunate ! and
11 she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bare Jacob a second son. And
12 Leah said, Happy am I ! for the daughters will call me happy : and she called his name
13 Asher. And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the
14 field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I
15 pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken away my husband ? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also ?
16 And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to-night for thy son's mandrakes. And Jacob came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me ; for I have surely hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he
17 lay with her that night. And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare
18 Jacob a fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I gave my hand-
19 maid to my husband : and she called his name Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and
20 bare a sixth son to Jacob. And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry ; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons : and she called
21 his name Zebulun. And afterward she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah.
22 And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And
23 she conceived, and bare a son : and said, God hath taken away my reproach : and she
24 called his name Joseph, saying, The LORD add to me another son.

25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send
26 me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served thee, and let me go : for thou knowest my service
27 wherewith I have served thee. And Laban said unto him, If now I have found favor in
28 thine eyes, *tarry : for* I have divined that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. And he
29 said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest
30 how I have served thee, and how thy cattle hath fared with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it hath increased unto a multitude ; and the LORD hath blessed thee whithersoever I turned : and now when shall I provide for mine own house
31 also ? And he said, What shall I give thee ? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me
32 aught : if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed thy flock and keep it. I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing from thence every speckled and spotted one, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats :
33 and *of such* shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me hereafter, when thou shalt come concerning my hire that is before thee : every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, that *if found* with me shall be
34 counted stolen. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.
35 And he removed that day the he-goats that were ring-traked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black ones
36 among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons ; and he set three days' journey
37 betwixt himself and Jacob : and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks. And Jacob took him rods of fresh poplar, and of the almond and of the plane tree ; and peeled white strakes in
38 them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had peeled over against the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs where the flocks

39 came to drink ; and they conceived when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived
40 before the rods, and the flocks brought forth ringstraked, speckled, and spotted. And
Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked and all
the black in the flock of Laban ; and he put his own droves apart, and put them not unto
41 Laban's flock. And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger of the flock did conceive,
that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in the gutters, that they might con-
42 ceive among the rods ; but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in : so the feebler
43 were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had
large flocks, and maidservants and menservants, and camels and asses.

**2–10.** Wells are still the spots where the youth and girls of Bedouin life congregate, and at the wells alone is Oriental courtship carried on to this day. The Syrian girl, especially if a Druse or a Christian, unlike the secluded daughter of the towns, is frequently intrusted with the care of her father's flock. The well, the most precious of possessions, is carefully closed with a heavy slab until all those whose flocks are entitled to share its water have gathered. The time is noon. The first comers gather and report the gossip of the tribe. The story of Jacob and Rachel is, in its most minute details, a transcript of the Arab life of to-day. H. B. T.

There is a remarkable analogy in the two arrivals of Jacob and Abraham's servant at Haran —for not only did they come to the same city, but probably to the same well, where the same scene of pastoral and ancient simplicity is acted over again. The interview with Rachel is quite a counterpart to that with Rebekah ; and the emotions of the two strangers are the same and alike natural—those of the elder, Abraham's servant, being of a graver and more solemn character than those of Jacob, whose sensibilities were more vivid and tender. There was a providence in both ; and we recognize in them the similar dealings of God with the patriarchs of two generations. T. C.

*Robinson* informs us, "Over most of the cisterns is laid a broad and thick flat stone, with a round hole cut in the middle, forming the mouth of the cistern. This hole we found in many cases covered with a heavy stone, which it would require two or three men to roll away." The established regulation of the well demanded that the stone should not be rolled away until all the flocks had been brought together. But when Jacob learned that the approaching shepherdess was Laban's daughter, he oversteps this arrangement, and, in the overflowing joy of his heart, he offers his services, and rolls away the stone. K.

**11.** The unmarried daughters of the nomad Arabs to this day keep the flocks. The meeting is in the highest degree touching and natural. The forlorn man driven from his father's house by peril of his life, was at once met, not only with his own flesh and blood, but with her who in a moment becomes to him the centre of his new and recovered life. The history is drawn from the very deepest wells of human emotion. His service done, and his impassioned manner, justify his taking the privilege of a near relative, and all doubt on this is removed by his own avowal. Observe the continual and studied repetition, "the daughter of Laban his mother's brother,"—"the flock of Laban his mother's brother," —"her father's brother," —"Rebekah's son,"—"Jacob his sister's son." The joy of meeting is imparted to her whom he met : she *runs* and tells her father. And he again, in his turn, welcomes the wayfarer with the same affectionate ardor. *Alf.*

There was much to awaken strong emotion—the damsel was the daughter of "his *mother's brother;*" the sheep were "the sheep of his *mother's brother.*" It is not without purpose that his mother is thus presented to us. It apprises us that his mother was present to Jacob's mind. He pictured to himself, that just as that maiden appeared there before him, so, in that very place, had his mother appeared before Abraham's servant many years before—and that now he was among the scenes of *her* youth, of which she had often spoke to him. We can therefore well understand how, when he kissed his fair cousin and told her who he was, "he lifted up his voice and wept." This is a fine touch of nature. We begin to feel that there is truth in this man, of whom we have not yet seen much that is good. Our hearts begin to go with him. His future career begins to interest us. *Kit.*

**19.** Had Laban really possessed the generosity which his words *seem* to express, he would have given Jacob the object of his choice without compelling him to wait seven years for her. Though it was proper for Jacob to make the offer he did, it was mean and sordid for Laban to accept it. But it is evident that his own private interest was all that he studied. In his sister Rebekah's marriage there were pres-

ents of gold and silver, and costly raiment—things which wrought much on his mind. But here were none of these moving inducements. Here was a poor man who could only *talk* of promised blessings ; but upon these he set no value. He was governed by *sight*, and not by *faith;* and seeing that Abraham's descendants were partial to his family, he resolved to make his market of it. "Indeed he *sold* her to him for some years' service. This was *Laban* or *Nabal*, choose you which. Their names were not more like than their natures." (*Trapp.*)——God makes use elsewhere of the circumstance of this servitude of Jacob to keep up a spirit of humility, as well as a memory of their ancestry, among the children of Israel. It was a part of the confession required to be made by every Israelite when he presented his basket of first ripe fruits before the Lord, "A Syrian *ready to perish* was my father," alluding to Jacob's poverty and distress when he first came, at this time, into Syria. Again, when the prophet Hosea (12 : 12) reproves the people for their luxury and pride and haughtiness, he reminds them that "Jacob *fled* into the country of Syria, and Israel *served* for a wife, and for a wife he kept *sheep.*" It would, no doubt, tend to abate the loftiness of spirit of many of the wealthy and the great of this world, if they would look back upon the humble and perhaps *servile* condition of the founders of their families. *Bush.*

**20.** And Jacob served—hard service in keeping sheep. Seven years for Rachel. The purity and intensity of Jacob's affection was declared not alone by the proposal of a seven years' term of servitude,—a long period of waiting for a man of fifty-seven, if not seventy-seven, years of age,—but also by the spirit in which he served his avaricious relative. Many as the days were that required to intervene before he obtained possession of his bride, they were rendered happy by the sweet society of Rachel. And they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. "Words breathing the purest tenderness, and expressing more emphatically than the flowery hyperboles of romantic phraseology the deep attachment of an affectionate heart" (Kalisch) ; words too which show the lofty appreciation Jacob had of the personal worth of his future bride. T. W.——This is a step in Jacob's training in the fulfilment of God's promise at Bethel. It shows a new feature in his character. We see not the man of cunning devices, but one full of pure, self sacrificing love. Fourteen years of service willingly given to purchase, according to Eastern custom, his bride. *Montgomery.*

**23-25.** This imposition is the Nemesis that overtakes Jacob, and must have reminded him of the similar wrong of which himself had been guilty. As instead of the beloved son he had brought to Isaac him whom he had despised and neglected, so Laban now substitutes the despised Leah for his beloved Rachel. But as then Isaac had rightly blessed the son whom he had not loved, so also was Jacob's wife, though not beloved, yet destined for him by God. For it was Leah and not Rachel who became the mother of that son who afterward inherited the most precious part in the promise. K.——The conduct of Laban is perfectly intelligible as the outcome of his sordid avarice ; but it is difficult to understand how Leah could acquiesce in a proposal so base as to wrong her sister by marrying one who neither sought nor loved her. She must herself have been attached to Jacob ; and it is probable that Laban had explained to her his plan for bringing about a double wedding. *Whitelaw.*

He who, by subtilty and falsehood, stole away the blessing intended for his brother, is punished for his deceit, by finding a Leah where he expected a Rachel. He who employed undue advantage to arrive at the right of the firstborn, has undue advantage taken of him in having the firstborn put in the place of the younger. He who could practise upon a father's blindness, though to obtain a laudable end, is, in his turn, practised upon by a father, employing the cover of the night to accomplish a very unwarrantable purpose. *Hunter.*——In such a way God often deals with men, causing them to reap the bitter fruits of sin, even when they have lamented and forsaken it. "When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee." *Bush.*——Jacob was paid in his own coin. He had cheated his own father when he pretended to be Esau, and now his father-in-law cheated him. Herein, how unrighteous soever Laban was, the Lord was righteous. Even the righteous, if they take a false step, are sometimes thus recompensed in the earth. Many that are not, like Jacob, disappointed in the *person*, soon find themselves, as much to their grief, disappointed in the *character*. H.——He, the younger, had taken the place of the elder to gain the father's blessing. In this case the imposture is reversed, and practised upon himself. He did not recognize *Leah*, as his father did not recognize *him*. Here it was devised by a father, there it was a mother's work. Moreover it was part of the divine purpose that Leah should be his wife, and the intricacies of human cunning are

made to subserve the plans of the Most High. Leah became the progenitor of Him, the *promised*, who was to prove the *blessing of the nations*. C. G. B.

**26-30.** Laban shielded himself behind the pretence of a national custom, not to give away a younger before a firstborn sister. But he readily proposed to give to Jacob Rachel also, in return for other seven years of service. Jacob consented, and the second union was celebrated immediately upon the close of Leah's marriage festivities. It were an entire mistake to infer from the silence of Scripture that this double marriage of Jacob received Divine approbation As always, Scripture states facts, but makes no comment. *That* sufficiently appears from the life-long sorrow, disgrace, and trials which, in the retributive providence of God, followed as the consequence of this double union. A. E.——Laban is at least not so unjust as to require Jacob to discharge his second servitude before the marriage with Rachel. Immediately after the marriage-week is past, he gives to Jacob Rachel as his wife. The ceremony lasted *seven days*, from the symbolical idea attaching to the number seven, as being that of the covenant. Thus, instead of one, Jacob had two wives, and these sisters. K.——Jacob did not design it, but to have kept as true to Rachel as his father had done to Rebekah ; he that had lived without a wife to the 84th year of his age, could then have been very well content with *one :* but Laban, to dispose of his two daughters without portions, and to get seven years' service more out of Jacob, thus imposes upon him, and draws him into such a strait by his fraud H.

**27. Fulfil her week.** The marriage feast lasted *seven days ;* it would not, therefore, have been proper to break off the solemnities to which the men of the place had been invited (ver. 22), and probably Laban wished to keep his *fraud* from the public eye ; therefore he informs Jacob, that if he will fulfil the marriage *week* for Leah, he will give him Rachel at the end of it, on condition of his serving seven other years. To this the necessity of the case caused Jacob to agree ; and thus Laban had *fourteen* years' service instead of *seven ;* for it is not likely that Jacob would have served even seven *days* for Leah, as his affection was wholly set on Rachel, the wife of his own choice. By this stratagem Laban gained a settlement for both his daughters. Jacob had before practised deceit, and is now deceived ; and Laban, the instrument of it, was afterward deceived himself. A. C.

**31.** Rachel, whom he loved, is barren : Leah, who was despised, is fruitful : how wisely God weighs out to us our favors and crosses in an equal balance ; so tempering our sorrows that they may not oppress, and our joys that they may not transport us ! each one hath some matter of envy to others, and of grief to himself. Leah envies Rachel's beauty and love ; Rachel envies Leah's fruitfulness ; yet Leah would not be barren, nor Rachel blear-eyed. *Bp. H.*——**32-35.** Leah bore in succession four sons, whom she significantly named *Reuben* ("behold ! a son"), saying, "Surely *Jehovah* hath looked upon my affliction ;" *Simeon* ("hearing" ), "Because *Jehovah* hath heard that I was hated ;" *Levi* ("cleaving," or "joined "), in the hope "Now this time will my husband cleave to me ;" and *Judah* ("praised," viz., be Jehovah), since she said : "Now will I praise *Jehovah.*" It deserves special notice, that in the birth of at least three of these sons, Leah not only recognized God, but specially acknowledged Him as *Jehovah*, the covenant-God. A E.

The Lord, who had decreed temporary barrenness for Rachel the fair, opened the womb of Leah the despised ; neither to compensate Leah for the loss of Jacob's love, nor to punish Jacob for his sinful partiality ; but to manifest his power, to show that children are the heritage of the Lord, to vindicate his sovereignty, to attest that God giveth families to whomsoever he will, and to suggest that the line of promise was designed to be not the fruit of nature, but the gift of grace. T. W.

Jacob served doubly for Rachel ; but his service was amply paid afterward, although for a time the veil of disappointment hid the purpose of God. While Leah, as the mother of Judah, was the true ancestress of Messiah, still it was in Joseph, the son of Rachel, that Jacob's heart was satisfied, and that the history of the kingdom of God was most manifestly carried on and its glory set forth. As in the case of Sarah and Rebekah, so in that of Rachel, the birth of the representative seed is connected with special bestowments of grace. *Roberts.*

**30 : 1.** The eager desire for offspring among the Hebrew women is easily accounted for, if we bear in mind that the distinguishing blessing of Abraham was a numerous posterity, and in particular one illustrious person in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But Rachel's language was that of a sinful impatience, for which it would seem, that in the righteous providence of God she afterward paid dear, as she died in giving birth to Benjamin (ch. 37 : 16-19). *Bush.*——It is remarkable that as soon as Rachel had *children* (literally,

sons) she did die. It is impossible to read this and not to form an unfavorable estimate of Rachel. There is at the same time an impetuosity and an ungodliness in her speech to her husband. *Alf.*

**2.** It was a very grave and pious reply which Jacob gave to Rachel's peevish demand: *Am I in God's stead?* The Chaldee paraphrases it well, *Dost thou ask sons of me? Oughtest thou not to ask from before the Lord?* The Arabic reads it, "*Am I above God;* can I give thee that which God denies thee?" This was said like a plain man. He acknowledges the hand of God in the affliction which he was a sharer with her in. *He hath withheld the fruit of the womb.* Note, Whatever we want, it is God that withholds it, a sovereign Lord, most wise, holy, and just, that may do what he will with his own, and is debtor to no man; that never did, nor ever can do, any wrong to any of his creatures. The keys of the clouds, of the heart, of the grave, and of the womb, are four keys which God has in his hand, and which (the Rabbins say) he intrusts neither with angel nor seraphim. H.

**3-9.** It is remarkable how much against his will, and against his eventual peace, Jacob, who would have been content and happy with Rachel only, was absolutely driven, by the force of circumstances, to take not only two wives, but four. Having got the wrong wife in the first instance, he could only obtain the right one, by taking her as an addition to the first. Then, as the beloved one proved childless, he could not refuse her importunities to take her handmaid Bilhah, as Abraham had taken Hagar, that she might, through her, obtain children, and be put on equality with her fruitful sister and rival, Leah. Having done this, and the plan having produced the desired results, he could not, in justice, refuse Leah the same advantage, and was obliged to take her handmaid, Zilpah, in like manner. Thus Jacob became encumbered with four wives at once, all through his first disappointment, by the culpable contrivance of Laban. With respect to these handmaids, it should be observed, that they were slaves, whom Laban had presented to his daughters, as their own peculiar property at the time of their marriage, and who were entirely at their disposal, and free from the control of the husband. Such handmaidens had before been given to Rebekah, and had accompanied her to the land of Canaan. We meet with these dotal servants frequently in the ancient and modern East, and even among the classical ancients. Their condition, indeed, among the Greeks and Romans, seems to have been in all respects similar to that in which it here appears. *Kit.*

**10-24.** In the rivalry here disclosed, both parties were competitors for Jacob's good will; and both hoped for success, as the worldly often do in seeking their selfish ends, from the divine blessing on their own devices. God overrules all for ultimate good, and through such instruments as these works out his wise and beneficent ends; and herein are seen the wisdom and the mystery of his providence. In this disclosure of the interior life of Jacob's household we have an instructive picture of the evils of polygamy, in its legitimate results as here described. The peace of the domestic fireside is destroyed by conflicting rival interests. The paternal home, the sanctuary where God intended that all divine influences should centre and harmonize, in the development and growth of the human spirit into the likeness of God, is made the scene of discord and strife. It is no wonder, that from such a nursery proceeded such characters as are some of those described in the subsequent family history of Jacob. T. J. C.

**14-24.** On the part both of Rachel and Leah it was a miserable compact; and a pitiable spectacle it surely was, that of two rival wives contracting with one another about their husband's society. Rachel disposes of Jacob for a night in consideration of a handful of mandrakes, and Leah counts herself entitled to Jacob's favors as a boon which she had purchased with Reuben's yellow apples. Not to speak of the humiliation in all this to Jacob, and the continual misery to which he must have been subjected between his ardent sister-wives, think of the wretchedness it must have entailed upon the women themselves, and the dispeace it must have brought into the rival homes. A more powerful condemnation of polygamy it will be difficult to find, or a more signal illustration of the retribution which sooner or later follows on the heels of transgression. T. W.

There was much amiss in the contest and competition between these two sisters, yet God brought good out of this evil; for the time being now at hand when the seed of Abraham must begin to increase and multiply, thus Jacob's family was replenished with twelve sons, heads of the thousands of Israel, from whom the celebrated twelve tribes descended, and were named. H.——The narrative is meant to show that the mercy of God, and not natural means, bestows children upon these women. Leah does not refuse to her sister the mandragora of her son. Yet Leah conceives, and Rachel remains barren, and this because the

former had called upon the Lord, and He had heard her (verse 17). Again, it is when God remembers Rachel (verse 22), that she conceives. To enforce this truth, the Holy Ghost here brings before us a picture of human life, without keeping anything back. *Baum.*

That her family might yet further be built up, is the blessing Leah desires and devoutly prays for, as is intimated, where *God hearkened unto Leah.* Bishop Patrick well suggests here, that the true reason of this contest between Jacob's wives and their giving their maids to be his wives, was the earnest desire they had to fulfil the promise made to Abraham (and now lately renewed to Jacob), that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, and that in one Seed of his, the Messiah, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And he thinks it had been below the dignity of this sacred history, to take such particular notice of these things, if there had not been some such great consideration in them. H.——This view is strongly confirmed by the almost uniform reference of the sisters to *God's dealing with them* in connection with the successive births. B.

**21.** It is not usual to enumerate female descendants. Dinah's name is mentioned for the sake of the history in ch. 34. Jacob had more daughters : compare ch. 37 : 35 with 46 : 7. *Alf.*

**22. And God hearkened to her.** It appears that Rachel sought God by prayer, and that he heard her, so that her prayer and faith obtained what her impatience and unbelief had prevented. A. C.——**23, 24.** The whole narrative is full of God's justice and of man's weakness and unworthiness. The plain and hated wife-sister is blessed with children ; the husband's heart is won toward her ; the beautiful and beloved one is led, through crosses and failings, and her husband's anger, to a humbler mind, God in time compensating her for her affliction. *Alf.*

The whole account with all its *lights* and *shades* is another proof of the impartiality of the divine historian, and a strong evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Neither the spirit of *deceit* nor the *partiality* of *friendship* could ever pen such an account. A. C.

**25, 26.** Jacob was desirous to go to Canaan, though he had a great family to take with him, and no provision yet made for them. He had got wives and children with Laban, but nothing else ; yet he does not solicit Laban to give him either a portion with his wives, or the maintenance of some of his children. No, all his request is, *Give me my wives and my children, and send me away.* H.——**27.** But when he intimated this wish to his father-in-law, Laban was unwilling to part with one by whom he had so largely profited. With a characteristic confusion of heathen ideas with a dim knowledge of the being of Jehovah, Laban said to Jacob (we here translate literally) : "If I have found grace in thy sight (*i.e.* tarry), for I have divined (ascertained by magic), and Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake." The same attempt to place Jehovah as the God of Abraham by the side of the god of Nahor—not denying, indeed, the existence of Jehovah, but that he was the only true and living God—occurs again later when Laban made a covenant with Jacob. It also frequently recurs in the later history of Israel. Both strange nations and Israel itself, when in a state of apostasy, did not deny that Jehovah was God, but they tried to place Him on a level with other and false deities. A. E.

### Jacob's Scheme of Increase (verses 25–43).

Laban, who had experienced how remarkably the blessing of God had rested upon all that his son-in-law had done, endeavors by all means in his power to retain his services. With selfish readiness he agrees to the demand made by Jacob, that all the young of the flock which shall be *speckled* or spotted were to become his hire. But here also the cunning and calculation, which formed an element in Jacob's natural character, appear as strikingly as formerly in his relation to Esau. As then, so now, the purposes of God coincide with those of Jacob, notwithstanding the means by which he seeks to attain his ends. Jacob meets cunning with cunning, but Jehovah allows success to follow his cunning. K.

*Jacob's stratagem against Laban.* This was the employment of a triple artifice : (1) by means of pilled rods to produce party-colored animals in Laban's flock ; (2) on securing these, so to use them as to increase their number ; and (3) to direct the animals in such a fashion that the stronger and healthier portion of the flock should be his, and the feebler Laban's. That Jacob's stratagem did not fail is apparent ; but how far it was due to the particular expedient employed cannot be so easily determined. The extraordinary rapidity with which brown and speckled animals were produced appears to point to the intervention of a special providence in Jacob's behalf. That in what Jacob did there was nothing fraudulent may be inferred from the fact that he acted under the Divine approval (ch. 31 : 12), and made use of nothing but the superior knowledge of the habits of ani-

mals which he had acquired through his long experience in keeping sheep. T. W.——Thus it happened that however frequently Laban changed the conditions of agreement, eventually the advantage is always on the side of Jacob, and the flocks which by agreement became his increased very rapidly. K.

Rich in nothing but wives and children, he now desired to return to his father's house, accounting his charge his wealth. But God meant him yet more good. Laban sees that both his family and his flocks were well increased by Jacob's service. Not his love therefore but his gain makes him loath to part. Even Laban's covetousness is made by God the means to enrich Jacob. Behold, his strait master entreats him to that recompense which made his nephew mighty and himself envious : God, considering his hard service, paid him wages out of Laban's folds. In the very shapes and colors of brute creatures there is a divine hand, which disposeth them to his own ends. Small and unlikely means shall prevail, where God intends an effect. Little peeled sticks of hazel or poplar laid in the troughs shall enrich Jacob with an increase of his spotted flocks ; Laban's sons might have tried the same means and failed : God would have Laban know, that he put a difference betwixt Jacob and him ; that as for fourteen years he had multiplied Jacob's charge of cattle to Laban, so now for the last six years he would multiply Laban's flock to Jacob : and if Laban had the more, yet the better were Jacob's. *Bp. H.*

**28–34.** In our estimate of Jacob's conduct, we must remember what passed in these verses. It was with the distinct view of "providing for his own house also" that Jacob made this compact. Laban might have known, and doubtless did know, that it would be hard driven ; and a man with flocks and herds surely could not be ignorant of the stratagem which Jacob meant to, and did, employ. In fact, his very precaution in ver. 36 shows that he was aware of the influence of the spotted cattle. *Alf.*

**31–33. Thou shalt not give me anything.** This shows that Jacob had no stock from Laban to begin with. "I will pass through all thy flock to-day" with thee. "Remove thou thence every speckled and spotted sheep, and every brown sheep among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats." These were the rare colors, as in the East the sheep are usually white, and the goats black or dark brown. **And such shall be my hire.** Such as these uncommon party-colored cattle, when they shall appear among the flock already cleared of them ; and not those of this description that are now removed. For in this case Laban would have given Jacob something ; whereas Jacob was resolved to be entirely dependent on the divine providence for his hire. **And my righteousness will answer for me.** The color will determine at once whose the animal is. **34–36.** Laban willingly consents to so favorable a proposal, removes the party-colored animals from the flock, gives them into the hands of his sons, and puts an interval of three days' journey between them and the pure stock which remains in Jacob's hands. Jacob is now to begin with nothing, and have for his hire any party-colored lambs or kids that appear in those flocks, from which every specimen of this rare class has been carefully removed. M.——From henceforth, only what out of the white flocks were born ringstraked should be Jacob's property. Laban had acted here with the greatest severity and exactness, and he had no right to complain if he were dealt with according to the strict letter of the law. *Gerl.*

The *agreement* between Jacob and Laban depends upon the fact that, in the East, the sheep are commonly white and the goats black, while speckled and spotted animals are rarely seen. All spotted and dark sheep, and all speckled goats, are removed from the flock intrusted to Jacob, and led over to the flocks intrusted to the sons of Laban, so that only sheep of pure white color and goats of pure black color remain. All in that flock which should bear different colors were to become the hire of Jacob ; and as in the ordinary course of nature, anything of the kind expected by Jacob was scarcely to be anticipated, Laban agrees to his demand, selfishly rejoicing over what he supposes the folly of his nephew. And yet Laban comes off worst in a compact which apparently seemed so very advantageous to him. K.

The whole proceeding is that of one cunning man against another. Laban does not leave the matter in Jacob's hands, as proposed (ver. 32), but takes it into his own, and intrusts that part of the flock which is Jacob's hire to his (Laban's) sons, putting them at a distance from his own flock, which remains with Jacob, and keeping them studiously separate, to prevent the result which nevertheless Jacob's superior cunning brought about in the end. *Alf.*——In effecting his purpose at least, he did not use any unlawful means. We are to judge this history as many others in the Old Testament, in which, though God does not counsel or sanction the acts, He still allows them to be success-

ful, for the sake of carrying out His designs in relation to His kingdom. *Gerl.*

**37–43.** Darwin himself could scarcely have devised a more scientifically complete experiment on the "variation of animals under domestication" than that which Jacob conducted among the flocks of Laban. The setting of the "pillar rods" in the "watering troughs," and that by selection before the stronger cattle and at "breeding time," shows, if anything could show, an acquaintance with the modifiability of life-processes through the intelligent use of exterior agencies. *Thomas.*——**37–40.** His first device is to place party-colored rods before the eyes of the cattle at the rutting season, that they might drop lambs and kids varied with speckles, patches, or streaks of white. He had learned from experience that there is a congruence between the colors of the objects contemplated by the dams at that season and those of their young. At all events they bare many straked, speckled, and spotted lambs and kids. He now separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flock toward the young of the rare colors, doubtless to affect them in the same way as the pilled rods. *Put his own folds by themselves.* These are the party-colored cattle that from time to time appeared in the flock of Laban. **41, 42.** In order to secure the stronger cattle, Jacob added the second device of employing the party-colored rods only when the strong cattle conceived. The sheep in the East lamb twice a year, and it is supposed that the lambs dropped in autumn are stronger than those dropped in the spring. On this supposition Jacob used his artifice in the spring, and not in the autumn. It is probable, however, that he made his experiments on the healthy and vigorous cattle, without reference to the season of the year. **43.** The result is here stated. *The man brake forth exceedingly*, became rapidly rich. M.——*Jacob's ultimate advancement over Laban* comes out with greater prominence in the ensuing chapter; the present notices his amazing prosperity. "The man increased exceedingly;" and, in spite of Laban's craft and avarice combined, eventually eclipsed him in the possession of flocks and herds. *Whitelaw.*

# Section 59.

## JACOB'S FLIGHT AND LABAN'S PURSUIT. MEETING AND PARTING.

GENESIS 31 : 1–55.

1 AND he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our
2 father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob be-
3 held the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as beforetime. And the
LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be
4 with thee. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, and said
5 unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as beforetime; but the
6 God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served
7 your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God
8 suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the
flock bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy wages; then bare all
9 the flock ringstraked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to
10 me. And it came to pass at the time that the flock conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and
saw in a dream, and, behold, the he-goats which leaped upon the flock were ringstraked,
11 speckled, and grisled. And the angel of God said unto me in the dream, Jacob: and I said,
12 Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the he-goats which leap upon
the flock are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto
13 thee. I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst a pillar, where thou vowedst a vow
unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity.
14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for
15 us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and
16 hath also quite devoured our money. For all the riches which God hath taken away from
our father, that is ours and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.
17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon the camels; and he carried away
18 all his cattle, and all his substance which he had gathered, the cattle of his getting, which he
19 had gathered in Paddan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan. Now
Laban was gone to shear his sheep: and Rachel stole the teraphim that were her father's.
20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had ; and he rose up, and passed over the River, and set his face
toward the mountain of Gilead.
22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he took his brethren
23 with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey ; and he overtook him in the mountain
24 of Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream of the night, and said unto him,
25 Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And Laban came up
with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain : and Laban with his brethren
26 pitched in the mountain of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou
hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters as captives of the sword?
27 Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and steal away from me ; and didst not tell me, that I
28 might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp ; and hast
29 not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? now hast thou done foolishly. It is in
the power of my hand to do you hurt : but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight,
30 saying, Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And now,
*though* thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, *yet*
31 wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was
32 afraid : for I said, Lest thou shouldest take thy daughters from me by force. With whomso-
ever thou findest thy gods, he shall not live : before our brethren discern thou what is thine
33 with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban
went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maidservants ; but
34 he found them not. And he went out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now
Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them.
35 And Laban felt about all the tent, but found them not. And she said to her father, Let not
my lord be angry that I cannot rise up before thee ; for the manner of women is upon me.
36 And he searched, but found not the teraphim. And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban :
and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast
37 hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast felt about all my stuff, what hast thou found of
all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge
38 betwixt us two. This twenty years have I been with thee ; thy ewes and thy she-goats have
39 not cast their young, and the rams of thy flocks have I not eaten. That which was torn of
beasts I brought not unto thee ; I bare the loss of it ; of my hand didst thou require it,
40 whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was ; in the day the drought consumed
41 me, and the frost by night ; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. These twenty years have I
been in thy house ; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy
42 flock ; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of
Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now hadst thou sent me away
empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked thee yester-
43 night. And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, The daughters are my daughters, and the
children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that thou seest is mine : and
what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have
44 borne? And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou ; and let it be for a witness be-
45 tween me and thee. And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. And Jacob said unto
46 his brethren, Gather stones ; and they took stones, and made an heap : and they did eat
47 there by the heap. And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha : but Jacob called it Galeed. And
48 Laban said, This heap is witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of
49 it called Galeed : and Mizpah, for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we
50 are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives
51 beside my daughters, no man is with us ; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee. And
Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold the pillar, which I have set betwixt me and
52 thee. This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to
53 thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God
of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob
54 sware by the Fear of his father Isaac. And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and
called his brethren to eat bread : and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the moun-
55 tain. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and
blessed them : and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

Jacob was now commanded in a vision by "the God of Bethel" to return to the land of his birth ; and he fled secretly from Laban, who had not concealed his envy, to go back to his father Isaac, after twenty years spent in Laban's service—fourteen for his wives, and six for his cattle. Jacob, having passed the Euphrates, struck across the desert by the great fountain at Palmyra ; then traversed the eastern part of the plain of Damascus and the plateau of Bashan, and entered Gilead, which is the range of mountains east of the Jordan, forming the frontier between Palestine and the Assyrian desert. Laban called his kindred to the pursuit, and overtook Jacob on the third day in Mount Gilead. P. S.

Jacob was now ninety-six years of age. It has become manifest that he cannot obtain leave of Laban to return home. He must, therefore, either come off by the high hand, or by secret flight. Jacob has many reasons for preferring the latter course. **1, 2.** His prosperity pro-

vokes the envy and slander of Laban's sons, and Laban himself becomes estranged. **3.** The Lord now commands Jacob to return, and promises his presence to protect him. **4–13.** Jacob opens his mind fully to Rachel and Leah. Rachel, we observe, is put first. Several new facts come out in his discourse to them. *Ye know*—Jacob's appeal to his wives on this point—*that with all my might I served your father.* He means, of course, to the extent of his engagement. During the last six years he was to provide for his own house, as the Lord permitted him, with the full knowledge and concurrence of Laban. Beyond this, which is a fair and acknowledged exception, he has been faithful in keeping the cattle of Laban. *Your father deceived me, and changed my wages ten times;* that is, as often as he could. *God suffered him not to hurt me.* Jacob left his hire to the providence of God. He thought himself bound at the same time to use all legitimate means for the attainment of the desired end. His expedients may have been perfectly legitimate in the circumstances, but they were evidently of no avail without the divine blessing. And they would become wholly ineffectual when his wages were changed. Hence he says, God took the cattle and gave them to me. **10–13.** Jacob seems here to record two dreams, the former of which indicates the result by a symbolic representation, which ascribes it rather to the God of nature than to the man of art. The second dream makes allusion to the former as a process still going on up to the present time. This appears to be an encouragement to Jacob now to commit himself to the Lord on his way home. The angel of the Lord announces himself as the God of Bethel, and recalls to Jacob the pillar and the vow. The angel, then, is Jehovah manifesting himself to human apprehension. M.

The dream first related (in v. 10) seems to have occurred near the commencement, if not before, of his final and successful arrangement with Laban. It may have suggested his devices, or have been suggested by them ; or the same train of waking thoughts may have suggested both. The second dream is of higher significance, and occurred near the close of his connection with Laban ; see the last sentence of v. 13. In relating this to his wives, to account to them for his successful competition with Laban, he says nothing of the means by which he himself sought to insure it. The dream implies no judgment on these means ; and only reminds him that it was the divine favor that thwarted and punished the grasping and cruel avarice of Laban. Whatever judgment may be formed of Jacob's own conduct, the reader of the narrative will admit the justice of his complaint when he says (in v. 42) : "Thou wouldst now have sent me away empty." T. J. C.

Jacob's reasons for departing were, that God had commanded him to return ; that he had been very badly treated by Laban, whom to the best of his power he had faithfully served ; and that now the increase of wealth which God had given to him was viewed with jealous eyes by Laban and his family. **14–16.** The wives' reasons lay, first, in their assent to Jacob's own reasons. But, beside this, they had special reasons of their own. They had clearly, they said, nothing to expect from their father, who treated them as strangers, belonging to Jacob rather than to himself. And, furthermore, by selling them for Jacob's services, he had appropriated all the advantages to himself ; for if he had been paid for them in goods or money, custom would have required him to have employed some part of it in gifts to them ; which, in the way he had proceeded, was avoided, whereby they were left without the separate means to which they were, by their rank in life, entitled. *Kit.*

The whole speech of Jacob is inconsistent with the view that he had cheated and overreached Laban throughout. And vv. 7, 8 reveal to us another contribution to our judgment on this matter. Laban had done all he could to overreach on his side : he had frequently (ten times is used to signify very often) and capriciously changed the form of Jacob's hire ; but all to no purpose : God defeated his schemes and turned them against himself. *Alf.*——These words contain a clear vindication of Jacob from the charge brought against him by Laban's sons (v. 1), of having despoiled their father of his wealth. In whatever form his wages were to be paid to him, God, and not he, had so ordered the course of things that it should turn to his advantage, and this he would gratefully acknowledge. *Bush.*

**12.** The providence of God had taken notice of the hardships that Laban had put upon him, and took this way to right him ; *for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.* There is more of equity in the distributions of Divine Providence than we are aware of, and by them the wronged are righted really though perhaps insensibly.

**13. I am the God of Bethel.** That was the place where the covenant was renewed with him. Worldly prosperity and success are doubly sweet and comfortable when we see them flowing not from common providence,

but from covenant-love ; *to perform the mercy promised;* when we have them from God as *the God of Bethel,* from those promises of the life which now is that belong to godliness. H.——For more than twenty years the voice of God has been silent ; but now in the sky at Mesopotamia the light ariseth in darkness. That one declaration, " I am the God of Bethel," awakens a series of beautiful memories and joyful expectations ; and when the pilgrim's staff is resumed, Jacob is at least assured he shall not return to the land of his fathers unaccompanied or unprotected ! Is it marvel, amid all changes of times and circumstances, that the name " God of Bethel " has for ages been treasured in many a believer's heart? This name, when well considered, has the same significance to us as that of Jehovah : it is a covenant designation, and makes us know the Almighty as the unchanging, faithful Guide of His people on their earthly pilgrimage. *Van O.*

**14.** The answer of his wives is the only loyal one they could make, and is again entirely against the idea of guilt on Jacob's part. It is simply founded on the facts which have gone before in the history. Their father had sold them to Jacob : they were entirely severed from him, and he spared no pains to show them this ; Jacob's earnings, which were theirs also, their father was endeavoring to defraud them of. So that their consent is freely given to do that which God had commanded their husband. *Alf.*

**18, 19.** It was honestly done to take no more than his own with him, the *cattle of his getting* (v. 18). He took what Providence gave him and was content with that, and would not take the repair of his damages into his own hands. Yet Rachel was not so honest as her husband , she *stole her father's images* (v. 19), and carried them away with her. H.

**The teraphim of her father.** These images, which are mentioned through the whole history up to the Babylonish captivity, were a kind of household god, images in the likeness of men (so Michal put such an image in the bed, and pretended it was David, 1 Sam. 19 : 13). From several passages we gather that they were consulted and gave oracles in some way, though we do not now know how. *Gerl.* ——*Teraphim* were small images, kept as domestic idols or household gods. This was one of the practices of heathen superstition often met with in the Old Testament. Among the Hebrews, it was not so much a form of idolatry as a corrupting superstition engrafted on the true religion. Laban, in v 30, calls these images his gods ; and in ch. 35 : 4, " strange gods" are spoken of, in connection with another superstitious observance, as being in Jacob's family after his return to his home in Palestine. It is not necessary to suppose that they were strictly objects of worship. They were held in superstitious veneration as dispensers of good fortune, and as a protection against evil influences. They were also consulted as oracles (Zech. 10 : 2) ; properly, " the teraphim have spoken vanity." T. J. C.——These were a sort of " family-idols," figures of human shape, borrowed from the heathen world around him, which Laban probably used as a kind of oracle, to discover the future, or the fortunate issue of any undertaking. Such *teraphim* also appear from time to time in Israel, until, under Josiah, they were rooted out as "*abominations.*" C. G. B.

**21–30.** The story of his final flight to Canaan is perfect in its Oriental coloring. At the head of his flocks and herds ; with his wives, children and slaves, he strikes away, across the Euphrates, at the utmost speed so cumbered a march allows, for Mount Gilead, the outpost of " his own country." His flight remains unsuspected for three days, but, then, Laban, hearing of it, sets off on swift camels in pursuit ; overtaking the fugitives on the seventh day, while they were still among the richly wooded and watered hills of Gilead, which mark off the fertile land from the desert, east of the Jordan. The five tents of Jacob and his wives had been pitched on the slope of the hills, apparently where they reach their highest elevation of 5000 feet, not far from the Jabbok, the camels and flocks lying around, and now those of Laban are set up on a neighboring hill, specially known as Mount Gilead. It is a moment of real danger to Jacob, for Laban's kinsmen, as the men of his tribe with him are called, are much the stronger. He had given his daughters no inheritance, and had treated Jacob with the utmost duplicity and harshness, but with true Arab dissimulation he chides Jacob for having stolen away without giving him an opportunity of dismissing him and his wives with a parting feast, or even letting him give his daughters a farewell kiss. That he was thus placable, was due, we are told, to a dream he had had overnight, warning him to do Jacob no harm. But the fugitives had done him the terrible wrong of stealing his " gods," and these must be given back. *Geikie.*

*Gilead,* or *Mount Gilead,* signifies " rocky region," and was a name given to the range of mountains extending from the Sea of Galilee to

the Dead Sea, in contrast with the "*Mishor*," or plains and downs of Bashan. Southward, Gilead gradually blends with the highlands of Moab, while eastward there was no defined boundary, as it melts insensibly, first into plains, then into the great Syrian desert. From north to south its extent was about sixty miles. It is first mentioned here. H. B. T.

**24.** The very night before he came up with him, God interposed in the quarrel, rebuked Laban and sheltered Jacob, charging Laban not to *speak unto him either good or bad*, that is, to say nothing against his going on with his journey, for that it proceeded from the Lord. Laban, during his seven days' march, had been full of rage against Jacob, but God comes to him, and with one word ties his hands, though he does not turn his heart. The safety of good men is very much owing to the hold God has of the consciences of bad men, and the access he has to them. God sometimes appears wonderfully for the deliverance of his people, then when they are upon the very brink of ruin. H.

**26–30.** Throughout his address Laban means to insinuate that Jacob had no cause to leave him on account of anything *he* had done ; that where there was so much secrecy, there must be something dishonorable ; and that in pursuing him he was moved only by affection for his children. But his words are obviously full of hypocrisy. However he may talk about his regard to his children and grandchildren, that which lay nearest his heart was the substance which Jacob had taken with him, and which he no doubt meant in some way to recover. But he acts the part of thousands, who, when galled by an evil conscience, endeavor to ease themselves of its reproaches by transferring the blame from themselves to the persons they have wronged. He reproaches Jacob with a conduct which he well knew had resulted entirely from his own harshness and severity ; and with the utmost self-complaisance talks of the liberal and generous things which he *intended* to have done, after the call and occasion are over, and when his generosity is in no danger of being put to the test. *Bush.*——It is remarkable that Laban, in his complaint, says not a word about the property ; but having been prevented from the proceedings he contemplated, he makes the offence rest upon the unfriendly distrust evinced by this secret departure. He complains that his daughters had been carried away like captives taken with the sword. And again, he had not been suffered to kiss his daughters, before what was meant to be a final separation. The poor man is full of his daughters ; for whom, according to their own account, he has no real regard at all. *Kit.*

The entire scene is eminently rich in allusions to Oriental manners and customs. The behavior of Laban is true to life, and every expression is familiar to my ear "as household words." Laban says : The God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. Now we should think that Laban was uttering his own condemnation, and it appears strange that Jacob did not retort upon him by asking, Why, then, have you followed me? You have disobeyed the command of God, according to your own admission. Jacob, however, knew very well that such a plea would avail nothing. Laban believed that he fulfilled the intent of the divine command merely by refraining to injure Jacob, and so the latter understood it. The terms of the order were most comprehensive and stringent ; but the real intention was to forbid violence, and this sort of construction must be applied to Oriental language in a thousand cases, or we shall push simple narratives into absurdities. *W. M. Thompson.*

**32. Knew not.** Jacob acted with perfect honesty toward Laban. Henceforth we perceive no further trace of his former craftiness: The dealings of God's providence had removed his old characteristics ; and the genuine trust in God, which had from the first lain dormant in his heart, is now called forth. *Gerl.*

**34.** A saddle, so constructed as to be easy and comfortable for women on a journey, would be a convenient seat for their use in the tent, while halting for the night or for a few days' repose. Such are now in use in Eastern countries. T. J. C.——**35.** The stratagem succeeded to her wish, and Laban departed without suspicion. It seems natural to suppose that Rachel did believe that by the use of these teraphim Laban could find out their flight and the direction they took, and therefore she stole them, and having stolen them, she was afraid to acknowledge the theft, and probably might think that they would be of some use to herself. Therefore, for these two reasons, she brought them away.

**36–42. And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban.** The expostulation of Jacob with Laban, and their consequent agreement, are told in this place with great spirit and dignity. Jacob was conscious that though he had made use of cunning to increase his flocks, yet Laban had been on the whole a great gainer by his services. He had served him at least

twenty years, *fourteen* for Rachel and Leah, and *six* for the cattle. *Twenty* years of a man's life devoted to incessant labor, and constantly exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, deserve more than an ordinary reward. Laban's constitutional sin was *covetousness*, and it appears to have governed all his conduct, and to have rendered him regardless of the interests of his children so long as he could secure his own. That he had frequently falsified his agreement with Jacob, though the particulars are not specified, we have already had reason to conjecture from vs. 7, and with this Jacob charges him. A. C.——In ignorance, and under the strong impulse of indignation at such a charge, Jacob bids Laban search through all the camp for anything that he could claim as his ; and as to the gods alleged to be stolen, " with whomsoever thou findest them, let him not live." Had Rachel not shared her father's and husband's skill in deceit, it had fared ill with her and Jacob ; but she succeeded in concealing the images, and stopping the search. Laban having thus openly failed to substantiate the charge, Jacob's lips are angrily opened, and in the language almost of poetry and rhythm, he upbraids his father-in-law for all his conduct toward him during the past twenty years. We go so fully along with him in the eloquence of his wrath, that our only regret is in the remembrance that it is founded on the fiction of Rachel's innocence. W. H.——There is a deal of nature in this free and indignant outbreak of Jacob's—restrained by the fear of a detention that might have involved some of his family ; but when that fear had passed away, and its operation as a check was removed—then the sense of injury, kept under till now, comes forth in loud and open remonstrances against him who had inflicted it. It is this trueness to humanity which stamps an authentic character on the whole narrative. T. C.

**42. Except the God of my father.** With exemplary humility, and a devout sense of his dependence on the blessing of heaven, Jacob here refers his prosperity to its true source ; and in so doing he administers a keen reproof to Laban. He gives him plainly to understand that, notwithstanding this specious talk about his regard for his children, and his sending him away with songs, with tabret and with harp, yet it was owing to a special interposition of the Almighty that he was not stripped of everything he had. Laban had made a merit of obeying the dream, but Jacob was not to be imposed upon by such a pretence. He therefore construes the divine visitation into an evidence of his evil design, one by which God intended expressly to rebuke him, and thus plead the cause of the injured. As to the twofold title which he here applies to the Most High, " The God of Abraham and the *Fear* of Isaac"—the reason assigned for it by Adam Clarke strikes us as extremely plausible, viz. that " Abraham was long since dead, and God was *his unalienable* portion forever. Isaac was yet alive in a state of *probation*, living in the *fear* of God ; not exempt from the danger of *falling*, therefore God is said to be his *fear ;* not only the object of his religious worship in a general way, but that holy and just God, before whom he was working out his salvation with fear and trembling—fear, lest he should fall ; and trembling, lest he should offend." *Bush.*

**44-49.** Laban, despite his hypocritical professions of how affectionate their leave-taking might have been if Jacob had not " stolen away," stood convicted of selfishness and unkindness. In fact, if the conduct of Jacob, even in his going away, had been far from straightforward, that of Laban was of the most unprincipled kind. However, peace was restored between them, and a covenant made, in virtue of which neither party was to cross for hostile purposes the memorial pillar which they erected, and to which Laban gave a Chaldee and Jacob a Hebrew name, meaning " the heap of witness." Hypocritically as in the mouth of Laban the additional name of *Mizpah* sounds, which he gave to this pillar, it is a very significant designation to mark great events in our lives, especially our alliances and our undertakings. For *Mizpah* means " watchtower," and the words which accompanied the giving of this name were : " Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." A. E.

**53.** That when Abraham was with Nahor and Terah they were idolaters is clearly intimated (Josh. 24 : 2). " The God of Abraham, of Nahor, and of Terah," therefore, were words capable of a very ill construction. It is, in fact, little else than swearing by the idols of his Chaldean ancestors, and a virtual reproach of Jacob for having forsaken the religion of his forefathers. *Jacob sware by the Fear of his father Isaac.* Jacob seems evidently aware of Laban's design in thus referring to their early ancestors, and therefore, that he might bear an unequivocal testimony against all idolatry, even that of Abraham in his younger years, he would swear only " by the Fear of his father Isaac," who had never worshipped any other than the true God. *Bush.*

**55. And Laban rose up.** There is something that restraineth men from doing some evils, to which they have not only a natural proneness but an actual desire and purpose. When we behold Laban, who had pursued seven days after Jacob in an hostile manner, upon overtaking him to no more than expostulate with him, and then kiss him and bless him and return to his place ; and when we behold Esau, who had vowed the death of Jacob, and who went forth to meet him with four hundred men, armed as it should seem for his destruction, yet run to meet him on his approach, and embrace him and fall on his neck and kiss him : it cannot be imagined that such a stop should be made but by the restraint of some overruling hand ; nor may we doubt that every such restraint, by whatsoever second and subordinate means it be furthered, is yet the proper work of God, as proceeding from his irresistible providence. It was God that turned Laban's revengeful thoughts into a friendly expostulation : it was the same God that turned Esau's inveterate malice into a kind, brotherly congratulation. *Bp. Sanderson.*

**Laban departed, and returned unto his place.** That is, to Haran. This parting proved final. We hear no more of Laban, or of the family of Nahor. They might for several ages retain some knowledge of Jehovah ; but mixing with it the superstitions of the country, they naturally would, as there is little doubt they did, sink into gross idolatry and be lost among the heathens. *Bush.*——In Laban and his tribe, as they sweep out of sight into the Eastern Desert, we lose the last trace of the connection of Israel with the Chaldean Ur or the Mesopotamian Haran. A. P. S.

Laban is the man who appreciates the social value of virtue, truthfulness, fidelity, temperance, godliness, but wishes to enjoy their fruits without the pain of cultivating the qualities themselves. He is scrupulous as to the character of those he takes into his employment, and seeks to connect himself in business with good men. In his domestic life, he acts on the idea which his experience has suggested to him, that persons really godly will make his home more peaceful, better regulated, safer than otherwise it might be. But he never for one moment entertains the idea of himself becoming a godly man. In all ages there are Labans, who clearly recognize the utility and worth of a connection with God, who have been much mixed up with persons in whom that worth was very conspicuous, and who yet, at the last, "depart and return unto their place," like Jacob's father-in-law, without having themselves entered into any affectionate relations with God. *Dods.*

One cannot help thinking that this family at Haran must have been a wily, politic, deceitful set. Laban was characterized by it all over. Rebekah had her full share ; and we can detect no small spice of it in their descendants, as in Jacob on the one hand and Rachel on the other. There seems to have been a very unformed morale among them ; and, besides this, there was a great avarice in Laban, who was altogether of a very harsh and repulsive character. T. C. ——When we reflect upon Rebekah's conduct in the mode of obtaining Isaac's blessing for Jacob ; when we consider Jacob s own proceedings in securing the birthright and the blessing ; when we regard Laban's scandalous deceit in respect of Jacob's marriage—in which his daughter Leah took part ; and when we look to the various proceedings of the two sisters as rival wives ; with the theft of her father's images by Rachel, and her readiness at lying and deception to conceal that theft—we have, taken altogether, about as full an amount of immorality and lack of truthfulness as it would be easy to find in any one family. Dr. Chalmers remarks : "Altogether, our notion is very much confirmed with regard to the low standard of virtue in those days—not that we have a higher morality, but a higher rule of morality, than in the patriarchal ages of the world. They had a worse system of virtue in those days, even though at present we should fall short of them in practice. They had an inferior schooling to what we now have—a dimmer moral light—whether they were before or behind us in actual observances." All this is admirably just and true, and we cannot do better than bear these ideas in mind in considering the doubtful conduct of some personages in the early scriptural history. *Ki'.*

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Writers unfriendly to revealed religion, starting with the notion that the Mosaic narrative is uniformly exemplary, not historical, have enlarged with malicious triumph on the delinquencies of the patriarchs and their descendants. Perplexity and triumph surely equally groundless ! Had the avowed design of the intercourse of God with the patriarchs been their own unimpeachable perfection ; had that of the Jewish polity been the establishment of a divine Utopia, advanced to premature civilization, and overleaping at once those centuries of slow improvement, through which the rest of mankind were to pass, then it might have been diffi-

cult to give a reasonable account of the manifest failure. So far from this being the case, an ulterior purpose is evident throughout. The patriarchs and their descendants are the depositaries of certain great religious truths, the unity, omnipotence, and providence of God, not solely for their own use and advantage, but as conservators for the future universal benefit of mankind. Hence, provided the great end, the preservation of those truths, was eventually obtained, human affairs took their ordinary course ; the common passions and motives of mankind were left in undisturbed operation. Superior in one respect alone, the ancestors of the Jews and the Jews themselves were not beyond their age or country in acquirements, in knowledge, or even in morals ; as far as morals are modified by usage and opinion. They were polygamists, like the rest of the Eastern world ; they acquired the virtues and the vices of each state of society through which they passed. Higher and purer notions of the Deity, though they tend to promote and improve, by no means necessarily enforce moral perfection ; their influence will be regulated by the social state of the age in which they are promulgated, and the bias of the individual character to which they are addressed. Neither the actual interposition of the Almighty in favor of an individual or nation, nor his employment of them as instruments for certain important purposes, stamps the seal of divine approbation on all their actions ; in some cases, as in the deception practised by Jacob on his father, the worst part of their character manifestly contributes to the purpose of God : still the nature of the action is not altered ; it is to be judged by its motive, not by its undesigned consequence. Allowance, therefore, being always made for their age and social state, the patriarchs, kings, and other Hebrew worthies are amenable to the same verdict which would be passed on the eminent men of Greece or Rome. Excepting where they act under the express commandment of God, they have no exemption from the judgment of posterity ; and on the same principle, while God is on the scene, the historian will write with caution and reverence ; while man will judge with freedom, justice, and impartiality. *Milman.*

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For differing views as to the Chronology of Jacob's Life, see Bible Commentary, vol. 1, pp. 177–179, and Pulpit Com. Genesis, p. 383. B.

# Section 60.

## MAHANAIM. PREPARES FOR MEETING WITH ESAU.

GENESIS 32 : 1–23.

1 AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw
2 them, This is God's host : and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.
3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the field
4 of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau ; Thus
5 saith thy servant Jacob, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now : and I have
oxen, and asses *and* flocks, and menservants and maidservants : and I have sent to tell my
6 lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We
came to thy brother Esau, and moreover he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with
7 him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed : and he divided the people that was
8 with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two companies ; and he said, If
Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the company which is left shall escape.
9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, which
10 saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good : I am
not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto
thy servant ; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan ; and now I am become two com-
11 panies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau : for I
12 fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will
surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for
multitude.

13 And he lodged there that night; and took of that which he had with him a present for
14 Esau his brother; two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty
15 rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten
16 foals. And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself; and said
17 unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, say
18 ing, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? then thou shalt say, *They be* thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold,
19 he also is behind us. And he commanded also the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him; and
20 ye shall say, Moreover, behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure
21 he will accept me. So the present passed over before him: and he himself lodged that night in the company.
22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven
23 children, and passed over the ford of Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that he had.

**Chap. 32.** In the events of this chapter we find the *turning point* in the life of Jacob. *Before*, we notice halting on both sides, continual attempts at self-deliverance, artifices and cunning, weak and defective faith; *afterward*, we descry humility and resignation to the will of God, confidence and trust in God and in His leadings. At last the catastrophe, long preparing, takes place, by which old Jacob is to become a new man, and the wild excrescences of a richly endowed nature are to be removed. It is only now that we can understand how God had borne with all his perversity and so visibly blessed him, notwithstanding his cunning and his artifices. All this tended, through the mercy of God, to lead him to repentance. Much labor and sorrow, many trials and chastisements, and much pity and patience, were required before Jacob, so strong and wise in himself, was humbled and broken in heart. But the more glorious also was the fruit of this long and difficult training. The former stages in the life of Jacob were only preparatory to that great and striking event to which they pointed. All along it had been a struggle on the part of a clever and strong, a self-confident and self-sufficient person, who was only sure of the result when he helped himself—a contest with God, who wished to break his strength and his wisdom, in order to bestow upon him real strength and real wisdom. The life of Jacob had been a continuous struggle carried on by the patriarch with the weapons of his own strength and wisdom, and by God with the weapons of grace, of patience, and of long-suffering. This stage in his life closes with these fervent prayers, in which his oppressed heart found relief. K.

**1, 2.** Leaving the mountains of Gilead, Jacob had entered the land of promise, in what afterward became the possession of *Gad*. A glorious prospect here opened before him. Such beauty, fruitfulness, freshness of verdure, and richness of pasturage; dark mountain forests above, and rich plains below, as poor Palestine, denuded of its trees, and with them of its moisture—a land of ruins—has not known these many, many centuries! And there, as he entered the land, "the angels of God met him." Twenty years before they had met him, on leaving it, at Bethel, and, so to speak, accompanied him on his journey. And now in similar pledge they welcomed him on his return. Only then they had been angels ascending and descending on their ministry, while now they were "angel hosts" to defend him in the impending contest, whence also Jacob called the name of that place *Mahanaim*, "two hosts," or "two camps" And if at Bethel he had seen them in a "dream," they now appeared to him when waking, as if to convey yet stronger assurance. A. E.

Many years before Jacob saw the mystical ladder connecting heaven and earth, and the angels of God thereupon ascending and descending from the one to the other. Now, in circumstances of danger, he sees the angels of God on earth, encamped beside or around his own camp. He recognizes them as God's camp, and names the place Mahanaim, from the double encampment. This vision is not dwelt upon, as it is the mere sequel of the former scene at Bethel. Mahanaim has been identified with Mahneh, about eight miles from the cairn of Laban and Jacob. M. ——The name was handed on to after-ages, and the place became the sanctuary of the Transjordanic tribes. He was still on the heights of the Transjordanic hills, beyond the deep defile where the Jabbok, as its

name implies, "wrestles" with the mountains through which it descends to the Jordan. A. P. S.

God's hosts now become visible to allay the fear of man's hosts. Having just escaped one host of enemies, another is coming forth to meet him. At this juncture the heavenly messengers make their appearance, teaching him to whom he owed his late escape, and that he who had delivered did deliver, and he might safely trust would still deliver him; thus making good the previous promise (Gen. 28 : 15), "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land." It does not appear, indeed, that they were charged with any *verbal communication*, but Jacob would have no difficulty in *inferring* the object of their mission, to work in his mind an assurance of the overruling and protecting providence of God. Thus, too, when the vision of the fiery chariots was vouchsafed to Elisha's servant, it was left to his own mind to draw the proper conclusion from such a cheering spectacle. *Bush.*

**4-9.** Jacob now sends a message to Esau apprising him of his arrival. **Unto the land of Seir.** Arabia Petræa, with which Esau became connected by his marriage with a daughter of Ishmael. He was now married fifty-six years to his first two wives, and twenty to his last, and therefore had a separate and extensive establishment of children and grandchildren. **6. Four hundred men with him.** This was a formidable force. Esau had begun to live by the sword, and had surrounded himself with a numerous body of followers. Associated by marriage with the Hittites and the Ishmaelites, he had risen to the rank of a powerful chieftain. It is vain to conjecture with what intent Esau advanced at the head of so large a retinue. It is probable that he was accustomed to a strong escort, that he wished to make an imposing appearance before his brother. **7, 8.** Jacob, remembering his own former dealings with him, has good cause for alarm. He betakes himself to the means of deliverance. He disposes of his horde into two camps, that if one were attacked and captured, the other might meanwhile escape. He never neglects to take all the precautions in his power. M.

**9-12.** *Next, he seeks help from God.* This prayer is the first on record, for the intercession of Abraham for Sodom was more of a remonstrance or argument than a prayer. It does not seem that there could be a finer model for a special prayer than this,—the most ancient of all. He first claims his interest in the broad covenant with Abraham and Isaac, just as we might, and ought to, set forth our interests in the mercies covenanted to us in Christ; then he urges the covenant of personal mercies and promises; then he confesses his utter unworthiness of the blessings that have been showered upon him, yet venturing, notwithstanding, to hope for deliverance from the danger that lay before him. *Kit.*

The very first sentence of Jacob's prayer has this peculiarity about it, that *it is steeped in humility;* for he does not address the Lord as his own God at the first, but as the God of Abraham and Isaac. The prayer itself, though it is very urgent, is as lowly as it is earnest. With all its intensity, there is a loving remembrance of who Jacob is, and who Jehovah is; and the suppliant speaks in terms fit to be used toward the thrice holy God by a man of lowly heart. *Spurgeon.*——Such was the humble self-denying sense he had of his own unworthiness, that he did not call God his own God, but a God in covenant with his ancestors, *O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac;* and this he could the better plead, because the covenant, by divine designation, was entailed upon him. God's covenant with our fathers may be a comfort to us when we are in distress. H.

He approaches God *as the God of his father, and as such a God in covenant.* This was laying hold of the divine faithfulness. It was the prayer of faith; and though we may not have exactly the same plea in our approaches to God, yet we have one that is more endearing and more prevalent. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a character which excites more hope and in which more great and precious promises have been made than in any other. He addresses him *as his own God,* pleading what he had promised to *him,* as well as to his fathers. "Who saidst unto me, Return," etc. Jehovah has never made promises to us in the same extraordinary way that he did to Jacob; but, whatever he has promised to believers in general may be pleaded by every one of them in particular, especially when encountering opposition in the path of duty. Another remarkable feature in this prayer is *the deep spirit of self-abasement* which breathes through it. While he celebrates the great mercy and truth of God toward him, he acknowledges himself *unworthy* of the least instance of either. The original is, if possible, still more emphatic; "I am less than all the mercies," etc., as if he not only disclaimed the worthiness of *merit,* but also that of *meetness.* In view of his own sinful conduct on a former occasion, he is amazed at

the returns of mercy and truth which he had met with from a gracious God. By sin he had reduced himself in a manner to nothing ; but God's goodness had made him great. *Bush.* ——In this *confession* he gives to God alone the glory, as formerly he had taken it to himself, and in this *prayer* he casts away all confidence in his own strength and wisdom, which hitherto had been the anchor of his life, and he implicitly throws himself upon God and his promise. K.

On the one hand, Jacob seems the father of Jewish guile, fear, unscrupulousness and thrift. On the other, he appears not only as the deeply faithful lover in his youth and the most tender father, but as an elevated, majestic man of faith, who believed in high things, who valued them, and who left on record such words of lowliness and penitence for his faults, in such genuine tones, that the purest, most repentant hearts take them up from age to age and repeat them as their own : " I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies." *Mercer.*——He does not say, "all thy mercy"—the word is in the plural—" the least of all thy *mercies.*" For God has many bands of mercies ; favors never come alone, they visit us in troops. All the trees in God's vineyard are full of boughs, and each bough is loaded with fruit. All the flowers in God's garden bloom double, and some of them bloom sevenfold. We have not mercy only, but mercies numerous as the sand. Mercy for the past, the present, the future ; mercy to temper sorrows, mercy to purify joys ; mercy for our sinful things, mercy for our holy things. " All thy mercies ;" the expression has a vast acreage of meaning. He does not know how to express his sense of obligation except with plurals and universals. He seems to say to the Lord, " Because of all this great goodness, I pray thee go on to deal well with thy servant. Save me from Esau, or all thy mercies will be lost. Hast thou not in thy past love given pledge to me to keep me even to the end ?" Mercy and truth all through the Bible are continually joined together, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth." *Spurgeon.*——It was the just and humble acknowledgment of Jacob to God, " I am less than the least of all thy mercies." God rewards his faithful servants, not according to the dignity of their works, but his own liberality and munificence. In dispensing his favors, he does not respect the meanness of our persons or services, but gives to us as a God. And the clearest notion of the Deity is, that he is a being infinite in all perfections, therefore all-sufficient, and most willing to make his creatures completely happy. *Bates.*

Thankfulness was Jacob's distinguishing grace, as faith was Abraham's. Abraham appears ever to have been looking forward in *hope* —Jacob looking back in *memory :* the one rejoicing in the future, the other in the past. Jacob's happiness lay, not in looking forward to the hope, but backward upon the experience, of God's mercies toward him. He delighted lovingly to trace, and gratefully to acknowledge, what had been given, leaving the future to itself. Such was Jacob, living in memory rather than in hope, counting times, recording seasons, keeping days ; having his history by heart, and his past life in his hand ; and as if to carry on his mind into that of his descendants, it was enjoined upon them, that once a year every Israelite should appear before God with a basket of fruit of the earth, and call to mind what God had done for him and his father Jacob, and express his thankfulness for it. Well were it for us, if we had the character of mind instanced in Jacob, and enjoined on his descendants ; the temper of dependence upon God's providence, and thankfulness under it, and careful memory of all He has done for us. It would be well if we were in the habit of looking at all we have as God's gift, undeservedly given, and day by day continued to us solely by His mercy. He gave ; He may take away. He gave us all we have, life, health, strength, reason, enjoyment, the light of conscience ; whatever we have good and holy within us ; whatever faith we have ; whatever of a renewed will ; whatever love toward Him ; whatever power over ourselves ; whatever prospect of heaven. He gave us relatives, friends, education, training, knowledge, the Bible, the Church. All comes from Him. While He continues His blessings, we should follow David and Jacob, by living in constant praise and thanksgiving, and in offering up to Him of His own. *Newman.*

**11, 12.** Jacob's petition was that of a kind husband and a tender father. But it was mainly in the character of a believer in the promises, and one deeply concerned for the divine glory, that it was offered. It was as though he had said, " If my life, and that of the mother with the children be cut off, how are thy promises to be fulfilled ?" It is natural for us, as husbands and parents, to be importunate with God for the well-being of those who are so nearly related to us ; but the way to obtain mercy for them is to seek it in subordination to the divine glory. *Bush.*——*Thou saidst, I will deal well with thee,* and again in the close, *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good.* The best we can say to God

in prayer, is, what he has said to us. God's promises, as they are the surest guide of our desires in prayer, and furnish us with the best petitions, so they are the firmest ground of our hopes, and furnish us with the best pleas. H.

**Deliver me, I pray thee!** To this deliverance he urgeth the Lord by no less than seven arguments. First, God's covenant with Abraham and Isaac ; as if he had said, Remember those names with whom thou madest solemn covenants of protection, both to them and their posterity. The second is from God's particular command for this journey, "Thou saidst unto me, return ;" I departed by thy direction, and therefore thou, O Lord, art ever engaged to give me defence while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, he puts him in mind of his promises. Thou saidst, "I will deal well with thee," and that includes all other promises made unto him ; these he makes as a bulwark to defend him, as his anchor in the storm. This anchor must fail and this bulwark be broken down before danger comes to me. If thy promise stand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confession of his own unworthiness. Faith is always humble, and while we are most confident in God's word we are most distrustful of our own undesert : "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies." Though I am thus bold to urge thy covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undesert. Thou art a debtor by the promise thou hast made me, not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, he seeks to continue the current of God's favor by showing how plentifully it had already streamed unto him, which he doth by way of antithesis, setting his former poverty in opposition to his present riches : "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands ;" that is, thou hast blessed me abundantly, and shall my brother's malice blast all ? The sixth argument is the greatness and eminence of his peril : "I fear lest he come and slay the mother upon the children"—a proverbial speech in the holy Scriptures, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting total excision or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, he closes by re-enforcing the mention of the promise which he urgeth more strongly than before. There it was only, "Thou saidst I will deal well with thee ;" but here it is, "Thou saidst, In doing good I will do thee good"—that is, as it is rendered in our translation, "I will surely do thee good," and therefore let not my brother do me evil. We see Jacob's prayer was a pleading of reasons with God, and himself in the issue got not only a new blessing but a new name : Israel, a prince with God, a prevailer both with God and men. *Caryl.*

**13–21.** *His final act of preparation is the sending of gifts to Esau.* Here again Jacob shows his worldly wisdom. The disposition of this princely present in several droves, following one another at intervals (v. 16), was such as to repeat the favorable impression made by each, as they successively came before Esau accompanied with a conciliatory message. The announcement made with the first, and repeated with each succeeding one, "thy servant Jacob is behind us," would give time for reflection and kindly impressions, before their meeting. The number of those who had charge of the present, and successively made their appearance with their several messages, was also an expression of consideration and respect for the personage to whom it was delivered. T. J. C.

**22, 23.** As soon as he judges that the weaker members of the camp are refreshed enough to begin their eventful march, he rises and goes from tent to tent awaking the sleepers, and quickly forming them into their usual line of march, sends them over the brook in the darkness, and himself is left alone. *Dods.*

## Section 61.

### THE WRESTLING AT PENIEL. MEETING WITH ESAU. CAMP AT SUCCOTH. SHECHEM.

GENESIS 32 : 24–32 ; 33 : 1–20.

32 : 24 AND Jacob was left alone ; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the
25 day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his
26 thigh : and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou

27 bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he
28 said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast striven with God
29 and *with* men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he
30 blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for, *said he*, I have
31 seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And the sun rose upon him as he passed
32 over Penuel, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not the sinew of the hip which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip.

33 : 1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the
2 two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and
3 her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he himself passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his
4 brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed
5 him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are these with thee? And he said, The children which God hath gra-
6 ciously given thy servant. Then the handmaids came near, they and their children, and
7 they bowed themselves. And Leah also and her children came near, and bowed them-
8 selves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. And he said, What meanest thou by all this company which I met? And he said, To find grace
9 in the sight of my lord. And Esau said, I have enough; my brother, let that thou hast
10 be thine. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: forasmuch as I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face
11 of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my gift that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he
12 urged him, and he took it. And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I
13 will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and that the flocks and herds with me give suck: and if they overdrive them one
14 day, all the flocks will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according to the pace of the cattle that is before me and according
15 to the pace of the children, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth
16 it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. So Esau returned that day on his way unto
17 Seir. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.
18 And Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when
19 he came from Paddan-aram; and encamped before the city. And he bought the parcel of ground, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's
20 father, for an hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel.

The primary meaning of this story is, that Jacob, whose courage fails before his brother, and the reward of whose wiles threatens to be lost at one blow, is shown how man, despairing in his guilt, must wrestle out his cause with God, but that when he has gained the blessing from God, he has no more to be afraid of from any man. At the same time, Jacob's combat, when he *first wrestles with bodily strength*, is perhaps a picture of the perverseness of his former life, in which he believed himself to be able to force the fulfilment of the promise by the continual use of carnal means, and had made it difficult enough for the divine leadings to become master of him. His becoming lame is then meant to show that God does not permit Himself to be forced by natural strength. But then Jacob becomes victorious by the *weapon of prayer* (comp. Hos. 12 : 4). As the natural character of Jacob, the intriguing holder of the heel—the tough, shrewd man—prefigures the natural character of the nation that descended from him, so the spiritual character of God's people is prefigured in the wrestler with God. O.

The failings of the patriarchs are human, and the fact that they are not passed over in their history makes even the story of these shepherds of priceless worth to me. The timid Isaac, the crafty Jacob, stand before me as they really were; but they also show that the craft of the

latter was of little service to him, and in his old age he shows a chastened and tried character which makes him a Ulysses among those Shepherd Fathers. His history is an instructive mirror of the human heart, and God Himself has effaced the blots which the youthful Jacob bore in his very name. "Thou shalt be no longer Jacob," says He, "but a hero of God, Israel," a name of honor which the poetry of the race adopts. It is not bodily might that is recorded in it, but the heroism of God, prayer and faith. . . . Jacob has divided his camp and flocks from fear of a nocturnal surprise by his brother. And lo, there appears the divine form of a heavenly warrior and wrestles with him. All vanish with the dawn—indeed the tone and color of the whole narrative move dimly, as if under the mysterious shades of night. The wrestler does not give his name, but leaves it to be conjectured. Jacob does not triumph, tells the story to no one, only wonders how a simple shepherd like him could have seen Elohim face to face and still live. But the great charm is the inner lesson. It is shown the trembling patriarch how idle it is to fear Esau, when he has overcome Jehovah by his prayer. *Herder.*

It was a real transaction, but symbolical of Jacob's past, present, and future. The "man" who wrestled with Jacob "until the breaking of day" was Jehovah. Jacob had, indeed, been the believing heir to the promises, but all his life long he had wrestled with God—sought to attain success in his own strength and by his own devices. Seeming to contend with man, he had really contended with God. And God had also contended with him. At last further contest was impossible : Jacob had become disabled, for God had touched the hollow of his thigh. In the presence of Esau Jacob was helpless. But before he could encounter his most dreaded earthly enemy, he must encounter God, with Whom he had all along, though unwittingly, contended by his struggles and devices. The contest with Esau was nothing ; the contest with Jehovah everything. The Lord could not be on Jacob's side, till he had been disabled, and learned to use other weapons than those of his own wrestling. Then it was that Jacob recognized with whom he had hitherto wrestled. Now he resorted to other weapons, even to prayer ; and he sought and found another victory, even in the blessing of Jehovah and by His strength. Then also, truly at "the breaking of day," he obtained a new name, and with it new power, in which he prevailed with God and man. Jacob, indeed, "halted upon his thigh;" but he was now Israel, a Prince with God. A. E.

**24.** The man here spoken of is an appearance of God, that appearance of which we have before spoken, whose words are uttered in the Person and name of God himself. *Alf.*——In giving the reason for calling the name of the place Peniel (v. 30), he says, "for I have seen *God* face to face." Here then it is obvious that he who is at one time called "a man," is at another called "the Angel," and again designated by the august title of "God;" leaving us to the inevitable inference that the mysterious wrestler was no other than the divine personage so frequently brought before us under the appellation of "the Angel"—"the Angel of the Lord"—"the Angel of the Covenant;" that is, in other words, the Son of God appearing in that nature which he afterward assumed in accomplishing the work of our redemption. Could there be the least remaining doubt on the subject it is dispelled by the further statement of Hosea (12 : 4, 5), "He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us ; even the *Lord of Hosts ;* the *Lord* is his memorial ;" *i.e.* the name by which he is perpetually to be remembered in connection with this event. *Bush.*

We suppose the contest of Jacob to have taken place in *outward reality*, and in a *state of wakefulness.* Even the halting which was the consequence of this wrestling could only have been the result of a real and outward contest. It is quite decisive that the text contains not the slightest indication that this wrestling had been different from the passage over Jabbok (v. 23), and from the breaking of the day (v. 26 compared with v. 31). And it is not more difficult to believe that the angel of the Lord should, under certain circumstances, have really wrestled with Jacob than that he should outwardly and perceptibly have entered the tent of Abraham, have allowed his feet to be washed, and condescended to partake of the feast which the patriarch had hospitably spread for him. K.——If God could partake of the hospitality of Abraham, and take Lot by the hand to deliver him from Sodom, we cannot affirm that he may not, for a worthy end, enter into a bodily conflict with Jacob. These various manifestations of God to man differ only in degree. If we admit any one, we are bound by parity of reason to accept all the others. M.

**25, 26.** All along Jacob's life had been the struggle of a clever and strong, a pertinacious and enduring, a self-confident and self-sufficient person, who was sure of the result only when he helped himself—a contest with God,

who wished to break his strength and wisdom, in order to bestow upon him real strength in divine weakness, and real wisdom in divine folly. K.——All this self-confidence culminates now, and in one final and sensible struggle, his Jacob-nature, his natural propensity to wrest what he desires and win what he aims at, from the most unwilling opponent, does its very utmost and does it in vain. And as the first faint dawn appears, and he begins dimly to make out the face, the quiet breathing of which he had felt on his own during the contest, the man with whom he wrestles touches the strongest sinew in Jacob's body, and the muscle on which the wrestler most depends shrivels at the touch and reveals to the falling Jacob how utterly futile had been all his skill and obstinacy and how quickly the stranger might have thrown and mastered him. It is at this touch, which discovers the Almighty power of Him with whom he has been contending, that the whole nature of Jacob goes down before God. He sees how foolish and vain has been his obstinate persistence in striving to trick God out of his blessing, or wrest it from Him, and now he owns his utter incapacity to advance one step in *this* way, he admits to himself that he is stopped, weakened in the way, thrown on his back, and can effect nothing, simply nothing, by what he thought would effect all; and, *therefore,* he passes *from* wrestling to praying, and with tears, as Hosea says, sobs out from the broken heart of the strong man, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." *Dods.*

This mysterious wrestler has wrestled from him, by one touch, all his might, and he can no longer stand alone. Without any support whatever from himself, he hangs upon the conqueror, and in that condition learns by experience the practice of sole reliance on one mightier than himself. This is the turning-point in this strange drama. Despairing now of his own strength, he is Jacob still: he declares his determination to cling on until his conqueror bless him. He now knows he is in the hand of a higher power, who can disable and again enable, who can curse and also bless. He knows himself also to be now utterly helpless without the healing, quickening, protecting power of his victor, and, though he die in the effort, he will not let him go without receiving this blessing. Jacob's sense of his total debility and utter defeat is now the secret of his power with his friendly vanquisher. He can overthrow all the prowess of the self-reliant, but He cannot resist the earnest entreaty of the helpless. M.

"Let me go," he said, "for the day breaketh." He could have gone without asking leave of Jacob; but he suffers the firm embrace, and he asks relief from it only to draw out from Jacob the declaration, "I will not let thee go until thou bless me." Thus at last it is—when utterly stripped of the power by which he had previously maintained the struggle—when ceasing from wrestling, he simply clasps, and cleaves, and clings, and weeps, and prays, that Jacob prevails, and becomes in turn the conqueror.

**27.** "What is thy name?" the mysterious stranger says. The old name, representing the old character, must be confessed before the new name, representing the new character, is bestowed. "Thy name shall no more be called Jacob"--a supplanter, an overreacher, a successful wrestler with Esau or Laban--"but Israel"—a prince of God: "for as a prince hast thou power with God, and hast prevailed" W. H.

Jacob is here knighted in the field, and has a title of honor given him by Him that is the Fountain of honor, which will remain to his praise to the end of time. Yet this was not all; having power with God, he shall have power with men too. Having prevailed for a blessing from Heaven, he shall prevail for Esau's favor. Whatever enemies we have, if we can but make God our Friend, we are well off; they that by faith have power in Heaven, have thereby as much power on earth as they have occasion for. An interest in the angel's blessing is better than acquaintance with his name. The tree of life is better than the tree of knowledge. Thus Jacob carried his point; a blessing he wrestled for, and a blessing he had; nor did ever any of his praying seed seek in vain. See how wonderfully God condescends to countenance and crown importunate prayer: those that resolve, though God slay them, yet to trust in him, will at length be more than conquerors. H.——In allusion to this transaction, the Most High says by the Prophet (Is. 45: 19), "I said not to the *seed of Jacob* seek ye me in vain." The *seed of Jacob* is specified rather than the seed of Abraham, from this eminent instance of Jacob's praying and prevailing in a season of extremity, and thus carrying an implication that his "seed" would inherit their father's spirit in this respect. *Bush.*

**28.** No more Jacob shall thy name be called, but Israel,—a prince of God, in God, with God. In a personal conflict, depending on thyself, thou wert no match for God. But in prayer, depending on another, thou hast prevailed with God. There are three acts in this dramatic

scene : *first*, Jacob wrestling with the Omnipresent in the form of a man, in which he is signally defeated ; *second*, Jacob importunately supplicating Jehovah, in which he prevails as a prince of God ; *third*, Jacob receiving the blessing of a new name, a new development of spiritual life. M.

**32. Sinew of the hip.** Whatever be the literal sense of the words, they doubtless mean the "sciatic nerve," which is one of the largest in the body, and extends down the thigh and leg to the ankle. The Arabs still use this same word (*Nasheh* or *Naseh*) to designate the sciatic nerve. The custom prevailing among the Jews to this day of abstaining religiously from eating this sinew seems a lasting monument of the historical truth of this wonderful event in the life of Jacob. E. H. B.

Once that the touch of the Divine finger, once that the consciousness of the close and antagonistic presence of the Unseen, the Omnipotent, is felt—what an instant change in Jacob's feelings and Jacob's conduct! The new nature symbolized by the new name begins already to reveal itself. All his old self-confidence is gone. His only trust is in the love and pity and great power of the Being upon whom he hangs. No thought of Esau is in the mind, no fear of Esau in the heart. Other and far deeper thoughts and feelings fill mind and heart. To know him—the Eternal, the Almighty, the All Holy One ; to stand right with him, be blessed by him, is the one thing that engrosses and absorbs. "And Jacob asked him, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there." W. H.——From this moment was revealed in Jacob distinctly that higher nature, that powerful grip upon spiritual things, which Paul calls "laying hold upon eternal life," that singular life and power in the beliefs of the soul which must prevail. From this moment dates, though with many declensions, the true patriarch. *Mercer.*——His old life falls from him : purified and sanctified by God's gracious dealings with him, he is no longer to bear the old name Jacob, polluted as it was by his deceit ; but he is to be called by a new name, which shall be a witness of his victory in the severest trial—a victory gained by distrust of himself and firm trust in God's promise. God's manifestation to him is not destructive of life—his soul is preserved ; and though he halts on his thigh, the sun rises full of blessing upon him. This history is not only full of signification to Jacob, but it represents the combat and the triumph of the soldiers of God in their severest trials. At different times in their life God seems to be an adversary, to withdraw His grace and protection ; they find themselves in great peril outwardly or inwardly ; and they have nothing on which to rely but God's promise, in naked faith, without the comfort of His presence in their souls. These are the times when God is pleased to crown His true combatants, and for their greater confirmation to relieve them from their distresses. *Gerl.*

No purpose is more settled in the counsels of heaven, than to beat down the vain self-confidence which in one form or other is so prone to intrude itself into the devoutest doings of even the best of men. Some secret reliance upon their own strength, or uprightness, or understanding, mingles with the workings of their hearts, and prevents that entire renunciation of themselves which is essential to their being filled with the fulness of God. But when the Most High begins to wrestle with a soul, that is, to carry on more effectually the work of grace, he struggles with him in such a manner as to abase every high thing that exalts itself within him, and bring him to the lowest depths of self-abasement and self-annihilation. He will leave him nothing to plead but his pure gratuitous mercy in Christ. He will cause him, by his hidden influences in his heart, to feel that he has no alternative remaining but to embrace with the arms of faith the Son of God, and thus, as a *crippled conqueror*, to prevail. He thus learns to believe from the heart the declaration that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." In a word, we may see, in this incident of the mystical conflict, how completely the Lord designs to strip the sinner of every relic of self-confidence, that he may cast himself, weak, weary, lame, halting, and helpless, into the arms of the all-sufficient Saviour. *Bush.*

Very significant to Jacob in his after life must have been the lameness consequent on this night's struggle. He, the wrestler, had to go halting all his days. To the end some men bear the marks of the heavy stroke by which God first humbled them. It came in a sudden shock that broke the health, or in a disappointment which nothing now given can ever quite obliterate the trace of, or in circumstances painfully and permanently altered. With many men God is forced to such treatment ; if any of us are under it, God forbid we should mistake its meaning and lie prostrate and despairing in the darkness instead of clinging to Him who has smitten and will heal us. *Dods.*

They who bear the name of Israel have the same power to prevail with God that Jacob had at Peniel. The Angel of the covenant acted as though he *could not* break away from the eager patriarch. The effect was the same as though he could not. So it is with the struggle of other saints. How often is the appearance strongly held out that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *Griffin.*

God often holds the suppliant in suspense for the sake of throwing him upon self-examination. It may be simply indispensable both for the good of the suppliant and for the honor of God that he should be put to the deepest self-searching, to compel reflection and consideration for the purpose of convicting him of some sin that must needs be seen, confessed, repented of and put utterly away. We must not overlook the great fact that when God grants signal blessings in answer to any man's prayer, it will be taken as a tacit indorsement on God's part of this man's spiritual state. It will be considered as God's testimony that he is *not* "regarding iniquity in his heart"—that there are no iniquities palpable to the world and present to the man's own consciousness—indulged and not condemned and forsaken. On this principle it often happens that God must needs compel the praying soul to the most thorough heart-searching and to the most absolute and complete renunciation of known sin, before he can honorably and safely bestow signal blessings. If we place this obvious principle of God's spiritual administration alongside of the well known facts of Jacob's history, we shall readily see reasons, apparently all-sufficient, for this long delay and this remarkable struggle of prayer before the blessing was given. The Lord was searching his servant and impressing some great principles of practical duty upon his mind under circumstances well adapted to insure very thorough reformation. H. C.

A spirit of prayer is a demonstration of an Israel of God; this Jacob had, this he made use of, and by this he obtained the name of Israel. A spirit of prayer in straits, difficulties, and distresses—a spirit of prayer when alone, in private, in the night, when no eye seeth but God's, then to be at it, then to lay hold of God, then to wrestle, to hold fast, and not to give over until the blessing is obtained, is a sign of one that is an Israel of God. *Bunyan.*

To make Christ's forgiving love my own there must be the personal contact of my soul with the loving heart of Christ, the individual act of my own coming to Him, and, as the old Puritans used to say, "my transacting" with Him. Like the ocean of the atmosphere, His love encompasses me, and in it I live, and move, and have my being. But I must let it flow into my spirit, and stir the dormant music of my soul. I can shut it out, sealing my heart love-tight against it. I do shut it out, unless by my own conscious, personal act I yield myself to Him, unless by my own faith I come to Him, and meet Him. As if there were not another soul on earth, I and He must meet, and in solitude deep as that of death, each man for himself must yield to Incarnate Love, and receive eternal life. The flocks and herds, the wives and children have all to be sent away, and Jacob is left alone, before the mysterious Wrestler comes whose touch of fire lames the whole nature of sin and death, whose inbreathed power strengthens to hold Him fast till He speaks a blessing who desires to be overcome, and makes our yielding to Him our prevailing with Him. As one of the old mystics called prayer "the flight of the lonely man to the only God," so we may call the act of faith the meeting of the soul alone with Christ alone. A. M.

The words of the Wrestler at the brook Jabbok, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," express the truth that spiritual things will not submit themselves to sensible tests. When we seek to let the full daylight, by which we discern other objects, stream upon them, they elude our grasp. When we fancy we are on the verge of having our doubts forever scattered, and our suppositions changed into certainties, the very approach of clear knowledge and demonstration seems to drive those sensitive spiritual presences into darkness. As Pascal remarked, and remarked as the mouthpiece of all souls that have earnestly sought for God, The world only gives us indications of the presence of a God who conceals himself. What is possible, God has done. He has made Himself known in Christ. We are assured, on testimony that stands every kind of test, that in Him, if nowhere else, we find God. *Dods.*

That this was the turning-point in Jacob's inner life, the bestowment of the new name would of itself have led us to expect. A careful study of his life establishes it. Dividing that life into two parts—the 97 years that preceded, and the 50 that followed the great interview at Peniel—we find little in the former to attract; not a little, on the other hand, to repel. Abundance, indeed, of good materials of character exhibit themselves: nothing shallow, nothing weak, all of good quality and proportion, quick intelligence, warm affection, poetic sentiment, large and varied capacities for work,

firmness of purpose, fertility of resouree, unfaltering self-confidenee ; but the presenee, withal, of a selfish and sneaking cunning, an aptness for deceit and treachery in dealing even with nearest friends ; and the absence of any clear tokens of the continuous and dominant influenee of the aneestral faith—the first vision at Bethel making apparently but a temporary impression—one that faded away amid the manifold engagements of the strange and troubled life at Paddan-aram. In the second section, the fifty years that date from Peniel, Jacob appears a quite altered man ; the old nature, doubtless, still there, but thoroughly restrained and subdued. Not a trace of craft in any one piece of conduct : the crooked cunning ways followed no more. For adroitness there is simplicity ; for falsehood, truth. Self-confidence has got its death-wound in that midnight meeting. Trial follows trial, bereavement succeeds bereavement. Under severe and protracted discipline, the higher spiritual nature grows and ripens, till at the close the piety of Abraham and Isaac, their faith in God and in his special promises, shines forth in Jacob in undimmed lustre. W. H.

*The Meeting with Esau.*

**33 : 4.** Esau was moved and melted into tenderness by a responsive influence to the prayer of Jacob from on high, but still through the subordinate means which Jacob did well in putting into operation. The successive appliances, first of the costly gifts, secondly of his own personal appearance, and thirdly of the successive presentations of his family, were all exceedingly well devised on the part of Jacob ; and one cannot help admiring at the same time the exhibition of Esau. He had many good points and properties. Constitutionally, and as viewed in the light of a natural man, there was much to like and to admire in him. T. C.

**9, 10.** Jacob might truly say, not in mere compliment, that the sight of Esau's face had been to him as the sight of God's face, discerning as he did in his brother's altered mind to him a sign of the divine favor. **13, 14.** The excuse was genuine. Tender children, such as many of Jacob's were, would be injured, and flocks in milk, or with young, would die even with a day's overdriving ; and therefore could not keep pace with Esau and his men. Observe Jacob addresses Esau always as "*my lord*," but Esau speaks to Jacob as "*my brother*." The one had a guilty conscience, which forbade him to touch on the brotherly relation ; the other was clear on this matter. *Alf.*——There was nothing in Jacob's language to his brother which, when translated from Eastern to our Western modes of conduct and expression, is inconsistent with proper self-respect. If he declined the offer of an armed guard, it was because he felt he needed not an earthly host to protect him. Besides, it was manifestly impossible for cattle and tender children to keep up with a Bedouin warrior band. A. E.

**16.** Esau retires to make room for Jacob ; he leaves to him the land of his inheritance, and disappears on his way to the wild mountains of Seir. In those wild mountains, in the red hills of Edom, in the caves and excavations to which the soft sandstone rocks so readily lend themselves, in the cliffs which afterward gave to the settlement the name of "Sela" or "Petra," lingered the ancient aboriginal tribe of the Horites or dwellers in the holes of the rock. These "the children of Esau succeeded, and destroyed from before them, and dwelt in their stead." It was the rough rocky country described in their father's blessing : a savage dwelling, "away from the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven ;" by the sword they were to live ; a race of hunters among the mountains. A. P. S.

The best about Esau is "good nature," which is but nature after all, nature and not grace. As contemplated according to the higher requirements and demands which God makes on men, he is described by the Apostle in a single word, but one full of significance, "a profane person ;" one with no sanctuary in his soul, with little sense or none of the privileges so glorious and unique which were the inheritance of the elect family, and of himself as the centre of that family, divinely appointed to this honor. That the prerogatives of the firstborn, slighted and despised by him, should pass to his younger brother, lay in the very nature and moral necessity of things. There were no fitnesses, no predispositions for this honor in him ; rather the most marked unfitnesses for standing at the head of the great religious movement in which was wrapped up the whole future hope of the world. *Trench.*

**17.** Jacob turned in a north-westerly direction to *Succoth*, a place still east of Jordan, and afterward in the possession of the tribe of Gad. Here he probably made a lengthened stay, for we read that "he built him an house, and made booths for his cattle," whence also the name of *Succoth*, or "booths." A. E.——That the stay at Succoth was more than a mere ordinary halt for rest and refreshment upon a journey, is apparent ; but can we form any idea of

its probable length? We have ten years here to come and go upon, for so long was the interval between Jacob's reaching the borders of Canaan and his arrival at Hebron. Over these intervening years we have to distribute the incidents recorded in the 33d, 34th, and 35th chapters of Genesis. To allow of Dinah and her brothers being of anything like sufficient age, it is necessary to throw the events narrated in the 34th chapter as far on as possible toward the close of this period. If we assign a year to the journey from Shechem to Bethel, Ephrath, Edar, and Mamre, there remain nine years to be divided between Succoth and Shechem. But did Jacob actually allow ten years to elapse after reaching the banks of the Jordan before visiting his aged parent at Mamre? That after so long a separation Jacob should have lived continuously so many years so near to Hebron as he was at Succoth and at Shechem—a single week enough to carry him to and fro, and give him a day or two with Isaac—without once going to see him, is incredible. W. H.

Jacob may have paid one or more *visits* to his father, either from Shechem or even from Succoth, without the circumstance being expressly mentioned in the narrative. From chap. 35 : 8, compared with chap. 24 : 59, we gather that soon after his return Jacob must have come into immediate contact with the house of his father, for we find the nurse of Rebekah, who had been in the house of Isaac, now in that of Jacob. But Jacob no longer subordinated his own household to that of his father, because in virtue of God's leadings HE had now been constituted the representative of the promise, while after Isaac had bestowed the blessing upon Jacob, his work, so far as he was the representative of the promise, was finished. K.

**18. Came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan.** The words seem designedly chosen to indicate that God had amply fulfilled what Jacob had asked at Bethel : to "come again in peace." A. E.

In Abraham's time, we do not read of any *city* of Shechem. The phrase used is, "the *place* of Sichem," meaning, probably, the place where Sichem, or Shechem, afterward stood. The city of Shechem would seem to have taken its name from the son of Hamor, the prince of whom Jacob bought his parcel of ground, and hence would date from about the time of Jacob's sojourn there. Shechem is midway between Jerusalem and Nazareth—and between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. The broad valley running north and south through the territory of ancient Ephraim—the ancient Moreh, the modern Mukhna—is flanked on the west by a range of abrupt and lofty hills. The road usually followed leads through the plain along the base of these hills. Travelling northward by this road, we reach, some six or seven miles from the southern limit of the plain, the point where a cross-valley from the west breaks through the range of hills over against us. This cross-valley, where it issues into the great valley, is half a mile wide. The hills, at the points of intersection, rise to the dignity of mountain promontories ; that on the north being the historical "Ebal," while that on the south is the still more renowned "Gerizim" Out a little from the base of Gerizim, just where the edges of the two valleys meet, is Jacob's Well ; while a few hundred yards to the north, or near the middle of the cross-valley, is the little Mohammedan structure known as "The Tomb of Joseph." N. C. B.——See Sketch Map, New Testament, vol. 1, pp. 96 and 100.

Coming from the south, you continue up the plain of Mukhna until Mount Gerizim faces boldly upon it on your left. Passing the eastern front of Gerizim and looking westward, you see at a glance the Vale of Shechem, running east and west, with Mount Gerizim on the south and Ebal on the north. Just where you turn is Jacob's Well. Gerizim and Ebal, it will be noted, are lofty parallel ridges, with the narrow Vale of Shechem between them. Gerizim stands two thousand eight hundred and forty-eight feet above the sea, and Ebal three thousand and seventy-six feet. At the eastern opening of the vale is Jacob's Well ; a mile to the west is the city of Nâblûs, replacing the old Shechem and lying at the foot of the ridge of Gerizim. About a half mile north of Jacob's Well is a village called Askar, probably the Sychar whence came the "woman of Samaria" with whom our Lord held converse as he sat by Jacob's Well. *Dulles.*

The patriarchal associations of Shechem are almost as suggestive as those of Hebron itself ; not only beginning with Abraham, but being made impressive by existing relics—Jacob's Well and the Tomb of Joseph answering severally to Abraham's Oak and the Cave of Machpelah. But beyond Hebron Shechem was made memorable by a visit of our Saviour to its vicinity, and by the delivery there of a recorded discourse of the Great Teacher—a discourse not only fraught with heavenly truth and power, but also characterized by local and historical references, such as fitted it to the time and place and purpose of His address. N. C. B.

**19. For a hundred pieces of money.** Hebrew *kesitah, lamb*, but here to be rendered in the plural "lambs," by which is probably meant a kind of coin with the image of a lamb stamped upon it. "The primitive race of men being shepherds, and their wealth consisting in their cattle, in which Abraham is said to have been rich, for greater convenience metals were substituted for the commodity itself. It was natural for the representative sign to bear impressed the object which it represented; and thus, accordingly, the earliest coins were stamped with the figure of an ox or a sheep." (*Maurice Ind. Antiq.*) Thus the ancient Athenians had a coin called *βους ox*, because it was stamped with the image of an ox. Thus, too, the Latin word for *money*, *pecunia*, is derived from *pecus*, *cattle*, from the image stamped upon it. The custom no doubt arose from the fact that in primitive times the coin was the ordinary value of the animal whose image it bore. *Bush.*

**20. And he erected there an altar.** At the same place where Abraham had built his first altar (chap. 12 : 7). Abraham dedicated his "unto the LORD, who appeared unto him;" Jacob his, unto "God, *the God of Israel*," which was the new name that God had given him. The place was at or near Shechem : so that the woman of Samaria might well say as she did to our Saviour, that "their fathers worshipped God in that mount." *Wall.*——This whole transaction was an act of faith on the part of Jacob. The purchase of land, and that in the very place where God had first promised Abraham that the land should be his, showed his conviction in the certainty of that promise as renewed to him and his seed : the erection of an altar on this his own land connected the act of purchase with the God in whose promise he trusted : and the naming of that altar bespoke special faith in the symbolic meaning of the name which God had given him. *Alf.*

The *Oak of Moreh*, the first camp and altar of Abraham in the Land of Promise, was before Shechem (Gen. 12 : 6), at the entrance of the valley, in the plain, and, therefore, close to *Jacob's Well.* There is no spot in sacred story more accurately marked out than this; and here we are on the very spot consecrated by the presence of our Divine Saviour; exactly where we are sitting He sat. The arched arcade that protected the well and invited the wayworn traveller by its shade, has long since crumbled; but its pillars and ruins are strewn around us. This is the parcel of ground that Jacob bought of Hamor, the father of Shechem, where, like his grandfather, he first encamped when he came from the land of the east : here he, too, erected his altar, and here he sank that well, which has remained to the present day. The very circumstances of the case explain both his purchase and his sinking this well. Though the plain is the richest in the land, yet the streams in it are few. The brook that flows eastward from the valley is but scanty, for most of the springs drain to the west. Two of the three great fountains on this side the city were within its boundaries, and the third belonged to the village hard by. Jacob knew well the jealousy between the settled inhabitants and the nomad herdsmen, who would certainly not be permitted to water their flocks within the precincts; and, therefore, with that cautious prudence which ever stamped his character, he purchases a small piece of land, quite outside the valley, where there could be no suspicion of his making a stronghold, and in it he sinks this well—which must have been, for those times, a most costly work—deeper far than the wells sunk by his grandfather Abraham, under similar circumstances, at Beersheba. . . . The sinking of a well in the East is a greater work than the erection of a castle or fortress, and whether the wells be those of Abraham at Beersheba or of Jacob at Shechem, they hand down the name of their constructor from generation to generation as the benefactor of posterity. How truly in keeping with Jacob's peace-loving character was this act of sinking a well in the plain at such enormous cost, so near the city and its abundant springs and rills; fearing lest his sons should be brought into collision with the men of Shechem concerning that water which was far more precious than land. Yet with characteristic caution he first purchased the piece of land of the lord of the country—of Hamor the father of Shechem. H. B. T.

The well is 75 feet deep, 7 feet 6 inches diameter, and is lined throughout with rough masonry, as it is dug in alluvial soil. Every one visiting the well throws stones down for the satisfaction of hearing them strike the bottom, and in this way, as well as from the *débris* of the ruined church built over the well during the fourth century, it has become filled up to probably more than half of its original depth. *Lieut. Anderson.* See New Testament, vol. 1, Section 22.

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The beautiful biographies of the Old Testament reveal to us the hand of God, leading the patriarchs and other holy men along a perpetual pilgrimage, in which they are as really without self-direction as was Israel in the wilder-

ness. Surely the way of Abram was not in himself, when God called him out of the East, led him into Canaan, and into Egypt, and through a long life gave him no inheritance, no, not so much as to set his foot on. The wanderings of Jacob were as little under his own control. And we have only to look back upon our own little biography, however quiet and uneventful that history may have been, to learn, that of the great body of events, very few have been at our own disposal. A higher wisdom hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation ; hath ordered how we should be educated ; the field of our labor ; the afflictions which have entered into our discipline, and the stations which we now occupy. J. W. A.

## Section 62.

### DINAH'S WRONG, AND THE CRUEL VENGEANCE OF HER BROTHERS.

GENESIS 34 : 1-31.

1 AND Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters
2 of the land. And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her ;
3 and he took her, and lay with her, and humbled her. And his soul clave unto Dinah the
4 daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. And Shechem
5 spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. Now Jacob heard that he
had defiled Dinah his daughter ; and his sons were with his cattle in the field : and Jacob
6 held his peace until they came. And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to
7 commune with him. And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it :
and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel
8 in lying with Jacob's daughter ; which thing ought not to be done. And Hamor communed
with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter : I pray you give
9 her unto him to wife And make ye marriages with us ; give your daughters unto us, and
10 take our daughters unto you. And ye shall dwell with us : and the land shall be before you ;
11 dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein. And Shechem said unto her
father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I
12 will give. Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say
13 unto me : but give me the damsel to wife. And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and
Hamor his father with guile, and spake, because he had defiled Dinah their sister, and said
14 unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised ; for that
15 were a reproach unto us : only on this condition will we consent unto you : if ye will be as
16 we be, that every male of you be circumcised ; then will we give our daughters unto you, and
we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.
17 But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised ; then will we take our daughter, and
18 we will be gone. And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. And the
19 young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter : and he
20 was honored above all the house of his father. And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto
21 the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, These men are
peaceable with us ; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein ; for, behold, the
land is large enough for them ; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give
22 them our daughters. Only on this condition will the men consent unto us to dwell with us,
23 to become one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised. Shall
not their cattle and their substance and all their beasts be ours? only let us consent unto
24 them, and they will dwell with us. And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened
all that went out of the gate of his city ; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of
25 the gate of his city. And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of
the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came
26 upon the city unawares, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son
27 with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went forth. The
sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.
28 They took their flocks and their herds and their asses, and that which was in the city, and
29 that which was in the field ; and all their wealth, and all their little ones and their wives,
30 took they captive and spoiled, even all that was in the house. And Jacob said to Simeon and
Levi, Ye have troubled me, to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the
Canaanites and the Perizzites : and, I being few in number, they will gather themselves to-
31 gether against me and smite me ; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said,
Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

The Bible hides nothing of shame ; is not afraid of words which make the cheek burn ; conceals nothing of moral crippleness, infirmity, or weakness, or evil. The Bible holds everything up in the light. Recognize, at least, the fearless honesty of the book. This is not a gallery of artistic figures ; this is no gathering together of dramatic characters—painted, arrayed, taught to perform their part æsthetically, without fault and beyond criticism ; these are living men and women—when they pray, when they sin, when they shout like a host of worshippers, and when they fall down like a host of rebels, or flee like a host of cowards. The Bible paints real characters. God says what is true about every one of us. If there is shame in it, we must feel it : the wrong is ours, not his. No other book could be so dauntless, could paint what we call the defective side of human nature with so bold a hand and yet claim to be the revelation of God. J. P.

The events related in this chapter could not have happened till Jacob had lived six or seven years in the neighborhood of Shechem ; for in a less time than this the two brothers could not have arrived at man's estate, nor Dinah herself have attained a marriageable age. *Bush.*

The history of Dinah is recorded to convince future ages that the sins of impurity are so hateful to God that they seldom go unpunished in this world ; if they do, worse will be their punishment in the next. *Bp. Wilson.*

**1. Dinah went out to see.** When this happened, the Scripture does not inform us. She was probably fifteen or sixteen years of age. The occasion of the calamity, Josephus tells us, was a great festival held at Shechem, which she ventured to go to, desirous of seeing the spectacles and fashions of the place. *Stackhouse.*

**7. Folly in Israel.** The first instance on record where the family of Jacob is designated by the title of "Israel." The word "folly" in Scriptural usage implies an act of shameless turpitude committed against the Divine precept. The "fool" of the Scriptures is not by interpretation a *simpleton*, but a *sinner;* and "folly," instead of *mental infirmity*, is *moral delinquency*, and that of an aggravated character. This should be especially borne in mind in reading the book of Proverbs. It is not unlikely that from the present example the phraseology here employed became proverbially applied to express the same sinful conduct. *Bush.*

As the cunning of Jacob forms a prototype of the future national character, so now also the carnal pride of the sons in their pre-eminence over the heathen indicates one of the main characteristics of the Jewish people at a later period. K.——A history like this brings typically before us all the aberrations caused during the course of history, when the belief in the high pre-eminence of Israel was in a carnal manner cherished by carnally-minded men. The feeling that they were the sons of Jacob, the chosen race, that any violation of their honor must be more terribly revenged than in the case of others, and that not even submission to the rite of circumcision could atone for it, appears to have mainly influenced the conduct of the sons of Jacob. *Gerl.*

The heads of the Jewish tribes, as we become better acquainted with them, are full of all rude and savage impulses, impatient of home subjection, not yet tamed by the sterner discipline of law. Just the inclinations and tendencies which we saw in Esau are in them. At the same time they have inherited much of their father's craft ; they will compass their ends by force or cunning, or both. It is no Arcadian picture ; the simple life of shepherds, as the book of Genesis represents it, is infected with vices which we think the most foreign from simplicity. *Maurice.*

The intention was malicious, as appears by the sequel of the story ; all they aimed at was to prepare them for the day of slaughter. Bloody designs have often been covered and carried on, with a pretence of religion ; thus they have been accomplished most plausibly, and most securely. But this dissembled piety is, doubtless, double iniquity. Religion is never more injured, nor God's sacraments more profaned, than when they are thus used for a cloak of maliciousness. H.

To execute rigor upon a submissive offender, is more merciless than just ; or if the punishment had been both just and proportionable from another, yet from them which had vowed peace and affinity, it was shamefully unjust. To disappoint the trust of another, and to neglect our own promise and fidelity for private purposes, adds faithlessness unto our cruelty. What impiety was this ; instead of honoring a holy sign, to take an advantage by it ! *Bp. H.*

It was true that Shechem had done ill, but he was endeavoring to atone for it, and was as honest and honorable *after the deed* as the case would admit. It was true that Shechem had done ill ; but what was that to all the Shechemites? Does one man sin, and will they be wroth with all the town? Must the innocent fall with the guilty? This was barbarous indeed. But that which above all aggravated the cruelty was the most perfidious treachery that was in it. The Shechemites had submitted to their conditions, and had done that upon which they had promised to become one people with them ; yet they act as sworn enemies to those to whom they were lately become sworn friends, making as light of their covenant as they did of the laws of humanity. And are these the sons of Israel? *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce.* This also added to the crime, that they made a holy ordinance of God subservient to their wicked design, so making that odious ; as if it were not enough for them to shame themselves and their family, they bring a reproach upon that honorable badge of their religion ; justly would it be called *a bloody ordinance.* H.

Jacob's sons, making every allowance for their outraged feelings, acquitted themselves most detestably in this whole transaction. The allegation of a religious principle in the proposition which they made makes it all the more atrocious ; and they stand forth in an aggravated likeness as the genuine descendants of the maternal family whence they sprung. There was something diabolical in the deceit wherewith the plot was constructed, and the appalling cruelty of its termination—when a hecatomb of innocent men and families was offered up to appease their vengeance. Altogether, it was a most revolting tragedy. T. C.

Their atrocious wickedness elicited from the dying lips of their father the prophetic denunciation (Gen. 49 : 7), "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel : I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" *Bush* ——As a token of the divine displeasure at this treachery and cruelty, they were excluded from the subsequent blessing, sharing in this respect the fate of Reuben, the firstborn, who incurred the same punishment from a similar cause. Hence it was that the promise of becoming the progenitor of the Messias devolved upon the fourth son, Judah. Moses, however, though himself a Levite, relates this enormity of Levi without a scruple,—a sufficient proof that he wrote in the service of God and truth, and not for any selfish purpose or personal interest. C. G. B.——In all the simplicity of truth, he gives an unvarnished statement of atrocities which have reflected everlasting disgrace upon the memory of the founder of his line. Would an impostor have done this? The story teaches us, with affecting emphasis, how one sin leads on to another, and, like flames of fire, spreads desolation on every side! Dissipation leads to seduction ; seduction produces wrath ; wrath thirsts for revenge ; the thirst of revenge has recourse to treachery ; treachery issues in murder ; and murder is followed by lawless depredation! *Bush.*

The whole of this miserable story has its place in the development of the kingdom of God. No alliance can be true and safe which is not upon the foundation of the Divine covenants. Circumcision without faith is a mere carnal ordinance, working evil. The sin of Shechem was avenged, but it was avenged by the commission of a greater sin by Simeon and Levi. It was not thus that the kingdom of God was to be spread. "Ye have troubled me," Jacob said. And so have all worldly agencies and methods troubled the true Church. It is better to suffer at the hands of the wicked than to make compromising alliance with them. The worldly Church has filled the world with misery. Abuse of Divine things has been the source of innumerable evils, not only among the people of God, but even in the sphere of men's secular life. But notwithstanding the sin of Simeon and Levi, their prompt execution of the Divine judgment upon the sin of Shechem must have produced a wholesome fear in the country, and connected that fear with moral purity. The sins of unchastity and violation of family rights were monstrously prevalent among the heathen people of Canaan, and it was doubtless ordered that this outbreak of human passion should bear witness for God as the God of purity and the God of households, who blesses the life which is free from the defilement of sensual indulgence, and in which the bonds of relationship and virtuous marriages and the sanctities of home are deeply reverenced. We read afterward, "the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them." *Pul. Com.*

## Section 63.

### AGAIN AT BETHEL. SECOND BLESSING. DEATH OF DEBORAH, OF RACHEL, OF ISAAC.

GENESIS 35 : 1–20, 27–29.

1 AND God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there : and make there an
altar unto God, who appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.
2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange
3 gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments : and let us arise,
and go up to Beth-el ; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day
4 of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the
strange gods which were in their hand, and the rings which were in their ears ; and Jacob hid
5 them under the oak which was by Shechem. And they journeyed : and a great terror was
upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.
6 So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan (the same is Beth-el), he and all the
7 people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el : be-
8 cause there God was revealed unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. And Deb-
orah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried below Beth-el under the oak : and the name
of it was called Allon-bacuth.
9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him.
10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob : thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but
11 Israel shall be thy name : and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God
Almighty : be fruitful and multiply ; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and

12 kings shall come out of thy loins ; and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee
13 I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in
14 the place where he spake with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he spake with him, a pillar of stone : and he poured out a drink offering thereon, and poured oil
15 thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el.
16 And they journeyed from Beth-el ; and there was still some way to come to Ephrath : and
17 Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour,
18 that the midwife said unto her, Fear not ; for now thou shalt have another son. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni : but his
19 father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath (the
20 same is Beth-lehem). And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave : the same is the Pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.
27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father to Mamre, to Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), where
28 Abraham and Isaac sojourned. And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years.
29 And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, old and full of days ; and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him.

**1-8.** Jacob returns to Bethel. He receives the direction from God. He had now been for some years lingering in Succoth and Shechem. There may have been intercourse between him and his father's house during this interval. The presence of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse (v. 8), in his family, is a plain intimation of this. M

**1.** Of the manner in which the present communication was made to him, nothing is said : but the purport of it was that he should remove to Bethel, situated about thirty miles south of Shechem, build there an altar, and perform the vow which he had previously made (Gen. 28 : 20, 22). It was now about thirty years since that vow was made ; Jacob had dwelt eight or ten in Canaan since his return from Paddan-aram, and had now attained to one hundred and six years of age ; yet for some reason unexplained he had hitherto delayed to pay it. *Bush.*——God reminds Jacob of his vow at Bethel, and sends him thither to perform it. Jacob had said in the day of his distress, *If I come again in peace this stone shall be God's house* (ch. 28 : 22). God had performed his part of the bargain, and had given Jacob more than bread to eat, and raiment to put on—he had got an estate, and was become two bands ; but, it should seem, he had forgotten his vow, or, at least, had too long deferred the performance of it. Seven or eight years it was now since he came to Canaan ; he had purchased ground there, and had built an altar in remembrance of God's last appearance to him when he called him *Israel* (ch. 33 : 19, 20) ; but Bethel still is forgotten. H.

The mercy of God changed the *flight from Shechem* into a *pilgrimage to Bethel*. *In itself* the Divine command (to go to Bethel) implied a Divine assurance in this danger ; for if God calls him to Bethel, He would surely bring him safely thither. But the *place* to which he was directed to go conveyed even more fully this assurance, for *in Bethel* he had found a refuge with God at the time of his first trouble. Then, God had promised to protect, to bless, and to bring back *him*, who, poor and forsaken, had to flee the land ; now, this prediction is richly fulfilled—Jacob has returned unscathed to the Holy Land, the rich proprietor of large flocks. K.

Of the truth that God remembers all his own mercies to his people, every act of his love toward every one of them, here is a confirmation. After thirty years, the vision at Bethel was fresh as ever in His memory. A mere dream of the night, sent by Him to comfort one of the least of his servants, is not forgotten. This we can believe ; but it is hard to believe that the Lord remembers the petty movements and workings of our minds, that the mighty God should hold in mind the promises of a worm. But hold them he does. He takes special notice of every word we utter that has a reference to himself, and every purpose we form. He records the vows we make to him, and his mind dwells on them as though he delighted in them, and longed to have them fulfilled. "I remember thee," he says to his church of old, " the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." Many years before this, he lets Jacob see that he remembers the kindness of his early years ; " I am the God of Bethel where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me ;" and now he refers to the same transaction again.

**2-4.** *Jacob's directions to prepare for worship at Bethel.* His neglect to carefully instruct his sons had borne bitter fruit. It necessitates the sudden and difficult effort now put forth to induce his sons to seek with him to serve God. He cannot rightly worship God unless his chil-

dren and household are with him in spirit. Jacob's neglect had led to carelessness by his sons of the Divine service. He could not himself enter heartily on the service until he had discharged his duty as guide and instructor to his family. *F. Hastings.*

**Strange gods.** The household deities—the teraphim, such as Rachel took with her. At all times among the Israelites there was united together with the worship of the one true God very much idolatry, in which the unbelief, or half-hearted belief of the people sought support. *Gerl.*——These "strange gods" were idolatrous and superstitious objects of which his sons had, as he knew, just before acquired possession, when they pillaged the town of Shechem—valuable for the materials of which they were composed, but which Jacob feared might in the end prove dangerous. The part of the injunction which directs the people to purify themselves, and to put on clean vestures, is remarkable as the first example of the personal cleanness which was afterward regarded as essential to a becoming appearance before God in worship—a salutary observance, which became a matter of ceremonial law under Moses, but which, like many other observances of the law, had its origin in earlier times. *Kit.*

**4.** Earrings were frequently used as amulets, believed to arrest evil, or to act as a charm; they were often covered with allegorical figures or mysterious sentences, according to the deities to which they were consecrated; they formed therefore one of the ordinary instruments of superstitious usages. *Kalisch.*

**5.** After the sanguinary conduct of Jacob's sons, is it not surprising that the neighboring tribes did not join together, and extirpate the whole family? So they certainly would, had not the terror of God fallen upon them. Jacob and the major part of his family were innocent of this great transgression; and on the preservation of their lives the accomplishment of great events depended: therefore God watches over them, and shields them from the hands of their enemies. A. C.

**8.** "Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel, under an oak, and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth (the oak of weeping)." Thus Deborah's long and faithful service in the household of Isaac, and the family mourning over the old, tried family friend, are deemed worthy of perpetual memorial in the Book of God! But from the circumstance that Deborah died in the house of Jacob, we infer not only that her mistress Rebekah was dead, but that there must have been some intercourse between Isaac and Jacob since his return to Canaan. Most probably Jacob had visited his aged parent, though Scripture does not mention it, because it in no way affects the history of the covenant. A. E.

**9–15. God appeared unto Jacob again.** He was now at Bethel, the place from which he may be considered to have set out for Paddan-aram, and where he made his vow that if God would be with him and be his God, he would make that place the house of God. He had now come back again to the same spot; he had fulfilled his vow by consecrating Bethel as the temple of God; this might then well be considered as the accomplishment of his return from Paddan-aram. Accordingly God appears to him here once more, promises him again, and more emphatically, protection, blessing, inheritance, confirms the name of Israel to him, and assures him that his posterity shall be numerous, powerful and blessed. And Jacob, recognizing the fulfilment of all that had been promised him when he fled from Esau, and of all that his vows had pointed to, rears again a stone pillar as he had done forty years before, and again solemnly names the place Bethel. The whole of this history thoroughly fits in to all that has gone before.

**11. I am God Almighty.** *El-Shaddai.* It was by this name that God revealed himself to Abram, when he changed his name to Abraham, and promised him the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession (ch. 17 : 8). The use of the same name here is singularly appropriate. E. H. B.

**16–20.** They draw near to a place then known only by its ancient Canaanite name, and now for the first time mentioned in history, "Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." The village appears spread along its narrow ridge, but they are not to reach it. "There Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath." A. P. S. ——Rachel had passionately said, *Give me children, or else I die;* and now that she had children (for this was her second), she died. Dying is here called *the departing of her soul.* The death of the body is but the departure of the soul to the world of spirits. H.

**19. Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.** Ephrath, or Ephrata, was the old, and Bethlehem the later name of this town. "Bethlehem" means "house of bread;" but we do not know on what occasion it was imposed. The town was in the allotment of the tribe of Judah, being situated about six miles south of Jerusalem, on the road to Hebron. It was a city in the time of Boaz (Ruth 3 : 11), whose grandson

was Jesse, the father of David, who was born and reared there ; in consequence of which the place is very frequently distinguished as "the city of David." *Bush.*

**20. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave.** This monument of Rachel's is the first that we read of in Scripture. It was certainly standing when Moses wrote, as appears from this verse ; and mention is made of it just before Saul was anointed king (1 Sam. 10 : 2). The monument now shown for it is a modern and Turkish structure. *Maundrell.*

**27.** At last Jacob came to his journey's end, "unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned." During the years of his stay at Succoth and Shechem Jacob had probably often visited his father, as he was only a few days' journey distant from him ; but now in the latter days of Isaac's life he went altogether into his neighborhood, taking with him his flocks and herds. *Gerl.*——He came to dwell with him, and to be the comfort of his old age. *Bp. Patrick.*——Isaac had the comfort of seeing the promise of God, in this instance of earthly prosperity, made good to himself and to Abraham ; as a sure pledge that the *spiritual* promises, that "in their seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed," would be made good in God's due time. *Bp. Wilson.*

**28, 29.** Here the life of Isaac is closed. Joseph must have been, at the time of Jacob's return, in his thirteenth year, and therefore his father in his hundred and fourth. Isaac was consequently in his hundred and sixty-third year. He survived the return of Jacob to Hebron about seventeen years, and the sale of Joseph his grandson about thirteen. M—— **His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.** As Isaac and Ishmael had buried Abraham. Hence it appears the friendship between Esau and Jacob continued after their interview on Jacob's return. *Bp. Patrick.*——Had the death of Isaac been introduced in the proper order of time, it would have fallen in the midst of the history of Joseph ; but it occurred about twelve or fifteen years after his being sold into Egypt. Esau and Jacob were 120 years of age at the death of their father, and from their uniting, as Isaac and Ishmael had done on a similar occasion, in performing the funeral obsequies of their father, it is to be inferred that the reconciliation between them was cordial and lasting. *Bush.*

But from henceforward the two branches of Isaac's family were entirely separated. The country about Mount Seir became the permanent residence of the Edomites, who were governed first by independent sheiks or princes, afterward were united under one monarchy. Jacob continued to dwell in Canaan, with his powerful family and ample possessions, until dissensions among his sons prepared the way for more important changes, which seemed to break forever the connection between the race of Abraham and the land of Canaan, but ended in establishing them as the sole possessors of the whole territory. *Milman.*

The dates and incidents in the life of Isaac may be tabulated as follows :

| Isaac. *Age.* | Abraham. *Age.* | Jacob. *Age.* | *Incident.* | *Record.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Birth | 100 | .. | .... .... ..... | xxi. |
| 25 | 125 | .. | Mount Moriah..... | xxii. |
| 37 | 137 | .. | Death of Sarah. ... .. | xxiii. |
| 40 | 140 | .. | Marriage of Isaac ..... | xxv. |
| 60 | 160 | .. | Birth of Esau and Jacob | xxv. |
| 75 | 175 | 15 | Death of Abraham .... | xxv. |
| 100 | .. | 40 | Marriage of Esau ... . | xxvi. |
| 123 | .. | 63 | Death of Ishmael .: .. | xxv. |
| .. | .. | .. | Abimelech..... | xxvi. |
| 137 | .. | 77 | Jacob's departure ..... | .... |
| 151 | .. | 91 | Birth of Joseph..... | xxx. |
| 157 | .. | 97 | Return of Jacob ..... | xxxi. |
| 168 | .. | 108 | Joseph sold ..... ..... | xxxvii |
| 180 | .. | 120 | Death of Isaac ..... | xxxv. |

A glance at this table reveals how little comparatively is told us of Isaac. He is born somewhere in the neighborhood of Gerar, in the 100th year of his father's life. His birth rekindles the old feud between Sarah and Hagar, which reaches its height when, at the feast made on the day of the weaning, Ishmael is seen making scornful mirth of the new-born child. At Sarah's imperious demand, supported by the Divine direction, Hagar and Ishmael are sorrowfully sent forth by Abraham to seek another home. Isaac remains the sole and undisputed heir of the promises.

Looking back upon the life of Isaac, the few frailties and failures it displays are lost in the remembrance of his sublime act of submission and self-surrender on Mount Moriah ; his veneration for his father's character, and constant willingness to walk in his steps ; his humility in accepting all from God as coming to him for his father's sake ; his attachment to his mother ; his affection for his wife ; his fondness—undue it may have been, yet touchingly tender—for the rough but generous Esau ; the unexpressed and unostentatious, but deep, serene, meditative piety which sustained and cheered him throughout the long, lonely years before his death. His truly was a spirit easy to be entreated, open to forgiveness, shut against malice, incapable of revenge ; showing much of

the temper inculcated by him of whom on Mount Moriah he was the type ; the meekest, most placable, most patient, most peace-loving most home-loving of the patriarchs. W. H.

This chapter closes the ninth of the pieces or documents marked off by the phrase " these are the generations." Its opening event was the birth of Isaac (25 : 19), which took place in the hundredth year of Abraham, and therefore seventy-five years before his death recorded in the seventh document. As the seventh purports to be the generations of Terah (11 : 27) and relates to Abraham, who was his offspring, so the present document, containing the generations of Isaac, refers chiefly to the sons of Isaac, and especially to Jacob, as the heir of promise. M.

## Section 64.

### REUBEN'S SIN. ESAU'S DESCENDANTS. JUDAH AND TAMAR.

GENESIS 35 : 21–26 ; 36 : 1–43 ; 38 : 1–30.

35 . 21 AND Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Eder. And it came to
22 pass, while Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's
concubine : and Israel heard of it.
23 Now the sons of Jacob were twelve : the sons of Leah ; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and
24 Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun : the sons of Rachel ; Joseph
25 and Benjamin : and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid ; Dan and Naphtali : and the
26 sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid ; Gad and Asher : these are the sons of Jacob, which
were born to him in Paddan-aram.
36 : 1 Now these are the generations of Esau (the same is Edom). Esau took his wives of the
2 daughters of Canaan ; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daugh-
3 ter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite ; and Basemath Ishmael's daughter, sister
4 of Nebaioth. And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz ; and Basemath bare Reuel ; and Oholi-
5 bamah bare Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah : these are the sons of Esau, which were born
6 unto him in the land of Canaan. And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daugh-
ters, and all the souls of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his posses-
sions, which he had gathered in the land of Canaan ; and went into a land away from his
7 brother Jacob. For their substance was too great for them to dwell together ; and the
8 land of their sojournings could not bear them because of their cattle. And Esau dwelt in
9 mount Seir : Esau is Edom. And these are the generations of Esau the father of the
10 Edomites in mount Seir : these are the names of Esau's sons ; Eliphaz the son of Adah
11 the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz
12 were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And Timna was concubine to Eli-
phaz Esau's son ; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek : these are the sons of Adah Esau's
13 wife. And these are the sons of Reuel ; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah :
14 these were the sons of Basemath Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Oholibamah
the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife : and she bare to Esau Jeush,
15 and Jalam, and Korah. These are the dukes of the sons of Esau : the sons of Eliphaz the
firstborn of Esau ; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, duke Korah, duke
16 Gatam, duke Amalek : these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom ;
17 these are the sons of Adah. And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son ; duke Nahath,
duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah : these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the
18 land of Edom ; these are the sons of Basemath Esau's wife. And these are the sons of
Oholibamah Esau's wife ; duke Jeush, duke Jalam, duke Korah : these are the dukes that
19 came of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. These are the sons of Esau, and
these are their dukes : the same is Edom.
20 These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land ; Lotan and Shobal
21 and Zibeon and Anah, and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan : these are the dukes that came
22 of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. And the children of Lotan
23 were Hori and Hemam ; and Lotan's sister was Timna. And these are the children of
24 Shobal ; Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam. And these are the children
of Zibeon ; Aiah and Anah : this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as
25 he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. And these are the children of Anah ; Dishon and
26 Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. And these are the children of Dishon : Hemdan and
27 Eshban and Ithran and Cheran. These are the children of Ezer ; Bilhan and Zaavan
28 and Akan. These are the children of Dishan ; Uz and Aran. These are the dukes that
29 came of the Horites ; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, duke Dishon,

30 duke Ezer, duke Dishan : these are the dukes that came of the Horites, according to their
dukes in the land of Seir.
31 And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any
32 king over the children of Israel. And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom ; and the
33 name of his city was Dinhabah. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah
34 reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned
35 in his stead. And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the
36 field of Moab, reigned in his stead : and the name of his city was Avith. And Hadad
37 died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. And Samlah died, and Shaul of Re-
38 hoboth by the River reigned in his stead. And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of
39 Achbor reigned in his stead. And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned
in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau ; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the
40 daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-zahab. And these are the names of the dukes
. that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names ; duke
41 Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth ; duke Oholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon ; duke
42 Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar ; duke Magdiel, duke Iram : these be the dukes of
43 Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession. This is Esau the
father of the Edomites.
38 : 1 And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned
2 in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. And Judah saw there a daughter of
3 a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua ; and he took her, and went in unto her. And
4 she conceived, and bare a son ; and he called his name Er. And she conceived again, and
5 bare a son ; and she called his name Onan. And she yet again bare a son, and called his
6 name Shelah : and he was at Chezib, when she bare him. And Judah took a wife for Er
7 his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the
8 sight of the LORD ; and the LORD slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy
brother's wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her, and raise up seed
9 to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his ; and it came to pass,
when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest he should
10 give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did was evil in the sight of the LORD :
11 and he slew him also. Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow
in thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown up : for he said, Lest he also die, like
12 his brethren. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house. And in process of time
Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died ; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto
13 his sheepshearers to Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. And it was told
14 Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father in law goeth up to Timnah to shear his sheep. And
she put off from her the garments of her widowhood, and covered herself with her veil,
and wrapped herself, and sat in the gate of Enaim, which is by the way to Timnah ; for
15 she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she was not given unto him to wife. When Judah
16 saw her, he thought her to be an harlot ; for she had covered her face. And he turned
unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee : for he knew
not that she was his daughter in law. And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou
17 mayest come in unto me? And he said, I will send thee a kid of the goats from the
18 flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? And he said, What
pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet and thy cord, and thy staff that is in
thine hand. And he gave them to her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.
19 And she arose, and went away, and put off her veil from her, and put on the garments of
20 her widowhood. And Judah sent the kid of the goats by the hand of his friend the Adul-
21 lamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand : but he found her not. Then he
asked the men of her place, saying, Where is the harlot that was at Enaim by the way-
22 side? And they said, There hath been no harlot here. And he returned to Judah, and
said, I have not found her ; and also the men of the place said, There hath been no harlot
23 here. And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be put to shame : behold, I sent
24 this kid, and thou hast not found her. And it came to pass about three months after,
that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot ; and
moreover, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and
25 let her be burnt. When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By
the man, whose these are, am I with child : and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are
26 these, the signet, and the cords, and the staff. And Judah acknow'edged them, and said,
She is more righteous than I ; forasmuch as I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he
27 knew her again no more. And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold,
28 twins were in her womb. And it came to pass, when she travailed, that one put out a
hand : and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came
29 out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came
out : and she said, Wherefore hast thou made a breach for thyself? therefore his name
30 was called Perez. And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon
his hand : and his name was called Zerah.

**35 : 22.** Jacob's sin is visited on him by degrees, stroke after stroke. The notice, Israel heard it, points to this, and serves, besides, to connect this account with the mention of this deed in the last speech of Jacob. *Alf.*——God so ordered it that this flagrant deed of sin

should be heard of, not by Jacob only, but by all that read the sacred story to the end of time. We afterward learn (Gen. 49 : 4) that he lost the birthright in consequence of it. Judgment never fails in the end to wait upon transgression. By his conduct, however, in reference to his brother Joseph (Gen. 37 : 20, 22), he seems to have obtained, in behalf of his posterity at least, a mitigation of his punishment. *Bush.*

It is a mercy that the Scripture record of human life is painted to us in such dark colors as it is. The Bible saints were not the heroes of romance, for then they might have been painted spotless. They were the men of real life, and the details of that life sometimes guilty enough. But, then, life was an earnest thing with them. It was transgression, if you will ; but then it was sore, buffeting struggle after that—much toiling and wandering in sharp suffering, that none knew but God : it was the penitence of men bent manfully on turning back to God. And so they fought their way back till they struggled out of the thick darkness into the clear light of day and peace. Let us lay this to heart. It is not the having been "far off" that makes peace impossible. It is not sin—no, not the darkest—that shuts out from restoration : "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." It is languid indecision, desperate sullenness, anything which keeps a man away from Christ, that prevents peace ; but in all this world there is nothing else. F. W. R.

**23-26.** A complete list of the sons of Jacob, now that Benjamin the youngest was born. This is the first time we have the names of these heads of the twelve tribes together ; afterward, we find them very often spoken of and enumerated, even to the end of the Bible (Rev. 7 : 4 ; 21 : 12). H.

**Ch. 36 :** *Esau and the Edomites.* As in ch. 25, the history gives the genealogies of Abraham's descendants by other wives in order to dispose of them, and to treat the line of Isaac, so here it gives the genealogies of the descendants of Esau in order to have done with them and to advance in the line of Jacob. In both cases the races enumerated are those which in subsequent times had to do with Israel. *Alf.*——It was as necessary to register the generations of *Esau* as those of *Jacob*, in order to show that the Messiah *did not* spring from the *former*, but that he *did spring* from the *latter*. The genealogical tables, so frequently met with in the sacred writings, are standing proofs of the truth of the prophecies that the Messiah should come from a particular family : which prophecies were clearly fulfilled in the birth of Christ. And they testify that the Messiah thus promised is found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who incontestably sprang from the last, the only remaining branch of the family of David. These registers were religiously preserved among the Jews till the destruction of Jerusalem, after which they were all destroyed ; insomuch that there is not a Jew in the universe who can trace himself to the family of David : consequently all expectation of a Messiah *to come* is, even on their own principles, nugatory and absurd ; since nothing remains to legitimate his birth. When Christ came all these registers were in existence. When Matthew and Luke wrote all these registers were still in existence ; and had *they* pretended what could not have been supported, an appeal to the registers would have convicted them of a falsehood. But no Jew attempted to do this, notwithstanding the excess of their malice against Christ and his followers ; and because they did not do it, we may safely assert no Jew *could* do it. Thus the *foundation* standeth sure. A. C.

**8.** Mount Seir is the mountain ridge extending along the east side of the valley of Arabah, from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf. The name signifies *rough*, or *rugged*. *Alf.*

Esau himself, in the lifetime of his father, migrated with his Canaanitish wives to this country, which afterward became the home of his descendants. This mountainous but fertile region had long been occupied by the Horites, whose territories they at first shared, but afterward, at a period antecedent to the Exodus, took possession of. In proof of their importance as a people even in these earliest times, a list of eight kings is given (vs. 31) who "reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king in Israel." Of their hereditary enmity to the chosen People we find traces not only in their refusal to allow their "brother Israel" (Num. 20 : 14) to pass through their land during the wanderings in the wilderness, though the request was made under circumstances of the utmost urgency, but from the terms in which we find them denounced by the later prophets. The warlike character of Esau was perpetuated in the latest of his descendants. They were ultimately brought into close alliance with their ancient foes. But, according to Josephus, the children of Israel found reason to dread the children of Esau no less as allies than as open enemies. Even in his own day that historian describes them as "a turbulent and unruly race, rushing to battle as if they were going to a feast." *Lee.*

**15-19.** The first dukes of Edom. The Alluph or duke is the head of the tribe among the Edomites, like the Nasi or prince among the Israelites.

**20.** *Horite.* The Horites—dwellers in caves (Troglodytes)—were the original inhabitants of Seir, and were driven out by the Edomites (Deut. 2 : 12) ; but they appear still to have remained among them in a part of the land. Esau had a Horite, Aholibamah, as his wife ; his son Eliphaz, a Horite, Timna, as a concubine, which would mark a declension on the part of the Horites. The families of this tribe are mentioned, because the descent of Aholibamah and Timna is given. The Horites derive their names from the caves, many of them hewn out of the rock, and from their underground dwellings. These are still to be seen in great numbers. *Gerl.*

**20-30.** In the midst of this genealogy of the Edomites, here is inserted the genealogy of the Horites, those Canaanites, or Hittites, that were the natives of mount Seir. This comes in here, not only to give light to the story, but to be a standing reflection upon the Edomites for intermarrying with them, by which, it is probable, they learned their way, and corrupted themselves. Esau having sold his birthright, and lost his blessing and entered into alliance with the Hittites, his posterity and the sons of Seir are here reckoned together. Those that

treacherously desert God's church, are justly numbered with those that were never in it; apostate Edomites stand on the same ground with accursed Horites. H.

**31–39.** The series of eight kings here enumerated are plainly elective, as not one succeeds his father. The king co-exists with the dukes, who are again enumerated at the close of the list, and are mentioned in the song of Moses (Ex. 15 : 15). These dukes are no doubt the electors of the common sovereign, who is designed to give unity and strength to the nation. It is natural to suppose that no sovereign was elected till after the death of Esau, and, therefore, if he lived as long as Jacob, after the children of Israel had been seventeen years in Egypt. **31.** *Before a king reigned over the children of Israel*, simply means before there was a monarchy established in Israel. It does not imply that monarchy began in Israel immediately after these kings. M.——In the previous chapter (vs. 11), there had been an emphatic promise from God Almighty (El-Shaddai) to Jacob that "kings should come out of his loins." The Israelites, no doubt, cherished a constant hope of such a kingdom and such a kingly race. Moses himself (Deut. 28 : 36) prophesied concerning the king that the Israelites should set over them; and hence it was not unnatural that, when recording the eight kings, who had reigned in the family of Esau up to his own time, he should have noted that as yet no king had risen from the family of his brother Jacob, to whom a kingly progeny had been promised. E. H. B.

**39.** The last of the eight kings, of whom it is not said that he died, seems to have been the contemporary of Moses, who made application to him for leave to pass through his land. If this be so, it follows that the remainder of Genesis comes immediately from the hand of Moses; a result which is in accordance with other indications that have presented themselves in the previous part of this book. This interesting monument of antiquity, notwithstanding its brevity, we shall find to be arranged with admirable precision. M.

**43.** Mount Seir is called *the land of their possession*. While the Israelites dwelt in the house of bondage, and their Canaan was only the land of promise, the Edomites dwelt in their own habitations, and Seir was in their possession. The children of this world have their all in hand, and nothing in hope, while the children of God have their all in hope, and next to nothing in hand. But, all things considered, it is better to have Canaan in promise than mount Seir in possession. H.——A worldly Esau may have his mount Seir, may have his portion at once, without any discipline, any acquaintance with God or himself. But Israel, the beloved of God, must forego rest, must wait, and suffer, and fight, in the way to it One exercise of faith and patience must succeed to another; and by these they must be trained into a meetness for the Canaan promised to them as their inheritance. And such is the Christian's calling. He must reckon on trial and conflict; he must learn to endure it, to go forward, and quit himself as a man, taking up his cross and carrying it patiently, yea, cheerfully, as what all his brethren are doing, as what God called him to when he called him to glory, and in assured faith that it shall soon be exchanged for glory. *E. Goode.*

The notice here taken of Esau is a kind of final leave taken of him and of his posterity, for we hear no more of them but as enemies of the chosen people. He is presented to our view for a moment, as surrounded with a glare of earthly glory, but as there is nothing stable without the pale of the kingdom of God, the curtain speedily drops upon all his splendor and pomp, and it is seen no more. The spirit of inspiration pausing for a moment to show that no word of God, however slight, fails of its effect, immediately passes to its main drift, and directs our view to the more abiding and truly glorious concerns of the line of Jacob. *Bush.*

**Ch. 38 :** The Bible makes no apology, draws no curtain, makes no excuse; on it goes: taking life as it is, and describing it without flattery or fear. The Bible is true to the very root and reality of things. The book does not ignore facts, but faces them, names them, proposes remedies for them, and searches into the root and core of the whole of them. Evil be to him that evil thinks. These things belong to a greater whole; they must not be detached; the part that would be intolerable is essential to the whole that is beautiful. J. P.

The removal to Egypt was needful in order to separate the sons of Jacob from the people of the land. How readily constant contact with the Canaanites would have involved even the best of them in horrible vices appears from the history of Judah, when, after the selling of Joseph, he had left his father's house, and, joining himself to the people of the country, both he and his rapidly became conformed to the abominations around. A. E.

*The history of Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar.* The object of this parenthetical chapter seems to be to show how near the offspring of Jacob were to falling into the habits and loathsome sins of the Canaanitish peoples; and to pave the way for the history of their removal into the land of Egypt, which took place by means of Joseph's being sold and carried thither. At the same time it defines and accounts for the two main branches in the kingly line of Judah. *Af.*——It supplies a very important link. In the *Toledoth*, or family history, of Jacob, the two chief persons were Joseph and Judah; Joseph from his high character, his personal importance, his influence in the future destinies of the race, and his typical foreshadowing of the Messiah; Judah, from his obtaining the virtual right of primogeniture, and from his being the ancestor of David and of the Son of David. E. H. B.

We see in this story how *one* interest – that for their families, and the preservation of them —overpowered every other feeling, even the sense of shame in a woman. The sanctity of an ancient descent, as it had been brought out of Mesopotamia by Abraham's posterity, and the establishment of the duties of the brother-in law (the Levirate, from a Latin word, levir, a husband's brother), are forcibly put forth by this narrative. The law was, that when a widow was left childless, it was the brother's duty to marry the widow, and the firstborn son of this

marriage was to oe regarded as the child of the deceased brother. The purport of the laws of the Israelites on the subject (no doubt derived from the patriarchs), was to preserve as much as possible the heirs in a direct line. The father lived in the son—the whole family descended from him was in a certain sense himself. *Gerl.*

**21, 22.** The word rendered *harlot*, in these two verses, and for which we have no other intelligible expression, means *consecrated;* namely, to the goddess of licentiousness, to whose temple and worship her gains were devoted. The name, and the custom on which it was founded, only partially reveal the fearful corruption of religion and morals wherever idolatry prevailed. T. J. C.

**25. By the man whose these are.** It is obvious that Tamar might before this have exposed Judah, had she been so inclined. In this, however, it does not appear that she was influenced by vindictive feelings toward Judah, or that she had any wish to hold him up to public abhorrence, but simply to vindicate her own conduct: while God, in the mean time, was carrying on his purpose to bring the offender, by this means, to a penitent confession of his fault. Instead of boldly summoning him into her presence, and requiring of him to stand forth as her accuser before the judges, she does not even name him, nor seek an interview, but sends to him the pledged articles, leaving it to his own conscience to rebuke him before God. *Bush.*

Not till she was in actual peril of a horrible death did she expose the author of her ignominy, and then only to himself. Though highly culpable, in the eye of the divine law, for the course she adopted, she seems to have intended merely to test her own rights, denied her by the timid policy of Judah. In regard to these rights, Judah himself acknowledged that her claim was just, and that he was the offender. Allowance must of course be made, in her case, for the loose sentiments and practices of the age. It has been justly said that her conduct, culpable as it was, was marked by shrewdness, tenderness, and magnanimity.

**26.** *She is more in the right than I.* That is, her cause is more just than mine; I am the offender. He admits that in withholding Shelah, her rightful husband (v. 11), he had been guilty of a wrong, and that her claim, which he had denied, was just. T. J. C.

We account for the tenacity with which TAMAR clung to her claims on the family of Judah by her anxiety to have a child from the *family of Judah.* And the less, by her birth as a heathen, she was entitled to any connection with the chosen race, the more jealously did she insist on the rights which marriage had given her. The same views, but in an infinitely higher and nobler form, appear under similar circumstances in the case of Ruth. However we may feel the deep aberration of Tamar, we cannot ignore that in it a higher faith was concealed. K.——Under the arts of Tamar in regard to Judah there still lay concealed faith in the sanctity of the customs and ordinances of the chosen race of Israel. For this reason, too, Judah bore her testimony, "She is more righteous than I." At the same time we see with what honesty and candor the Holy Scripture paints mankind; how God chooses his people not for any apparent external virtues, but according to his own free grace; how the whole of the scheme for the recovery of sinful man is a work of free favor; and, in fine, how there was enough of sin in Israel's family to require a speedy and severe purification, which did not long tarry. C. G. B.

The *birth of Pharez* forms the central point of this chapter, as, according to the law, he occupied the place of the firstborn of Judah. All that precedes only forms the basis for this account, and is so circumstantially narrated only because it at the same time affords a deep insight into the personal position and the history of Judah. Again the history of Judah and of his house is of such importance, because in his prophetic blessing Jacob assigns to Judah the sceptre of principality among the tribes of Israel; and the primogeniture of Pharez is brought out so prominently because Nahshon, the eminent prince and leader in Israel, during the journey through the wilderness, is a descendant of Pharez (Nu. 2:3). "But"—we continue with *Baumgarten*—"we may look beyond the natural horizon of Moses; for we do not merely say that Moses has written this account, but also that the Holy Ghost has written it. We therefore perceive in this narrative a glance into ages yet future. We call to mind that king David had sprung from Nahshon (Ruth 4:18-22), and that Jesus of Nazareth, who was made of God both Lord and Christ, was the son of David. We are therefore now tracing the lineage of Jesus Christ, and looking forward to Him who is both the commencement and the end of all things." The narrative discloses the sins of Judah with the same openness and faithfulness as it details the moral aberrations of other patriarchs and kings, for the purpose of showing that the high position assigned to them in the kingdom of God, and to which they were called and trained, was not due to their own virtue and excellency, but to the sovereign mercy of Him that had called them. K.

I find not many of Jacob's sons more faulty than Judah; who yet is singled out from all the rest to be the royal progenitor of Christ, and to be honored with the dignity of the birthright, that God's election might not be of merit, but of grace; else howsoever he might have sped alone, Tamar had never been joined with him in this line. *Bp. H.*——It is wonderful that this incestuous transaction should form one step of that chain which led to the birth of our Saviour. It is spoken of by commentators as a thing that deepens his humiliation. In associating himself by relationship with such an atrocity as this, his redemption descends to the lowest depths of human guilt and depravity. It casts a light on the infinite mercy of God; and makes me to feel in this alliance of the transcendental with the terrestrial in its grossest form, that God's ways are not as man's ways. T. C.

The four eldest sons of Jacob fell under very foul guilt. Reuben and Judah under the guilt of incest, Simeon and Levi under the guilt of murder; yet they were patriarchs; of Levi came the priests, of Judah the kings and Messiah; thus they became examples of repentance, and monuments of pardoning mercy. H.

Such a record as this thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis excites the clamor of scoffing unbelief against the moral teachings of the Old Testament ; and even suggests to some classes of Christians the theory that the Old Testament worship is of an inferior sort to that of the New Testament, because partriarchy and the chosen ones in the covenant of God are represented as guilty of great immoralities. It is sufficient to reply simply to this clamor that it rests entirely upon the misconceptions of the objector himself as to the plan and purpose of that Old Testament record. These objectors would have the inspired penman to sketch characters for us after the fashion of our modern biographies, which too often present us with mere ideal men that never existed, or rather the beatified ghosts of departed heroes. The Old Testament aims to furnish us a gallery of characters intended as often for our warning as for our example. It is not intended to set forth, merely for our admiration, perfect ideals of character in any single character but that character of the "Son of Man." All others are pictures of living men and women, with all the blots and blurs of a fallen humanity upon them, and "the old man" still adhering to them, even after the work of Divine grace has begun in the soul, and that under the most favorable circumstances. These objectors seem to forget that this Old Testament sets out with the account of how humanity, at first perfect, has fallen and become degraded ; and its purpose is not simply to inculcate moral maxims, but to trace the history of an intervention of divine grace to restore the fallen humanity instead of leaving it to its native gravitation toward utter brutishness, following its physical nature, or utter devilishness, following its spiritual nature. And its aim is to describe the conflict which ever comes from the attempt to develop out of this fallen humanity a new and regenerate humanity. If the Scriptures anywhere indorsed these heroes of the faith, and all the covenant people of God as perfect models of character for your imitation, then might you object to the picture of Noah and Lot as intoxicated ; of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as guilty of falsehood ; of Judah as driven by lust to incest ; of Moses as guilty of manslaughter, and David of murder and adultery. Or if you can show that God is represented as approving of these outbreaks of wickedness, that would be another matter, and there would be some point to this objection. But intelligently read and candidly judged, the Old Testament nowhere represents God as approving of any moral principle that is not approved in the New Testament, and that does not meet the approval also of every enlightened conscience. Nor in any instance does this history, exhibiting such remarkable fidelity in portraying its characters in all their faults as well as their virtues, fail to exhibit the sins and failings and foibles of the noblest of its heroes, as bringing upon them the marks of God's disapproval in the sorrow and suffering which infallibly followed—just as Jacob now is reaping in old age the fruits of the sins and foibles of his earlier years. S. R.

# Section 65.

## JOSEPH'S DREAMS. SOLD INTO EGYPT.

GENESIS 37 : 1–36.

1 AND Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. These are
2 the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren ; and he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's
3 wives : and Joseph brought the evil report of them unto their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age : and he made him a
4 coat of many colors. And his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his breth-
5 ren ; and they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. And Joseph dreamed a
6 dream, and he told it to his brethren : and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto
7 them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed : for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright ; and, behold, your sheaves came
8 round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us ? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us ? And they hated him yet
9 the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream ; and, behold, the sun and the
10 moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren ; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed ? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to
11 thee to the earth ? And his brethren envied him ; but his father kept the saying in mind.

12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph,
13 Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And
14 he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go now, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flock; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale
15 of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was
16 wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I
17 seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they are feeding *the flock*. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after
18 his brethren, and found them in Dothan. And they saw him afar off, and before he came
19 near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Be-
20 hold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, An evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will be-
21 come of his dreams. And Reuben heard it, and delivered him out of their hand; and said,
22 Let us not take his life. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him: that he might deliver him out of their
23 hand, to restore him to his father. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph of his coat, the coat of many colors that was on him; and
24 they took him, and cast him into the pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.
25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a travelling company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and
26 balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What
27 profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, our flesh. And his
28 brethren hearkened unto him. And there passed by Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces
29 of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and,
30 behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his breth-
31 ren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? And they took Joseph's coat, and
32 killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy
33 son's coat or not. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured
34 him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And Jacob rent his garments, and put sack-
35 cloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will
36 go down to the grave to my son mourning. And his father wept for him. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard.

The story of Joseph is simply the traditional account of the events which first led to the prolonged sojourn of the Israelites in a land which was neither their original nor their destined home, but one in which, in their own affecting phrase, they were strangers in a far country. Evidently, before it was written out in Genesis, the legend had often been repeated orally in their tents, at their camp-fires, and by the mothers of the tribe in teaching their children. And the story also had a strong local coloring; at that early day, the very dawn of the historical epoch of mankind, it would have been intelligible only to a people who knew all about Egypt, and had also heard much about Canaan, and the long journey through the desert between these two countries. It has the true ring of genuineness; it breathes the air of Egypt and the desert in the old, old times. *F. Bowen.*

——The life and fortunes of Joseph, embracing one tenth of the book of Genesis, form a story of unrivalled attraction, whether we consider the simplicity and beauty of the narrative, the pathos of the events, or the moral lessons which it teaches. Viewed merely as a human composition, as a specimen of simple, graceful, eloquent, and pathetic narrative, it has no parallel. We find in it all that gives beauty to the finest drama—a perfect unity of design; a richness and variety of incident involving the plot in obscurity, yet gradually drawing to its intended development; and the whole issuing happily, rewarding pre-eminent virtue with appropriate honors and blessings, and visiting iniquity with deserved humiliation and punishment. It is a story which persons of all ages, and minds of all orders, peruse with equal interest; and the degree of secret moral influence which the spotless example of Joseph has exercised upon countless numbers of the

readers of the Scriptures, can never be appreciated till the day of the revelation of all things. We behold in him one who in every period of life, in every change of condition, in every variety of relation, secures our confidence, our respect, our love. In adversity, we see him evincing exemplary patience and resignation ; in temptation, inflexible firmness ; in exaltation, unaffected simplicity, integrity, gentleness, and humility. *Bush.*

In the history of Joseph and his brethren, a train of events, apparently natural, and arising out of each other, is overruled to the accomplishment of the purposes and prophecies of God, without any interference with, or control over, the free agency of man ; and the history furnishes us with a complete specimen of the mode in which an all-wise Providence still governs the world. G. T.——Without infringing individual liberty or diminishing the guilt of those who sought to thwart the purposes of Heaven, those results were brought about which had been foreordained by Him whose counsels run parallel with the ages. Free, yet instruments in the accomplishment of a divine plan ! The incidents in Joseph's life furnish an argument in favor of an overruling Providence so overwhelming that no sophistry can successfully blunt its force. J. S. V.

Joseph is frequently spoken of as a "type of Christ." It may be doubted whether this is not too strong a statement of the case, since the Scriptures nowhere speak of him as any constituted type, and it is a wise maxim that nothing is properly a type except what the Scriptures make typical either directly or by very direct implication. But in the sense that the life of Joseph is the foreshadowing of things yet to come, it is a type of that of Jesus Christ. S. R.——It is the tendency of all history to be typical. We read it very inattentively if we do not see that it is constantly throwing itself up into representative men and events. This is the tendency, above all, of Divine history, for God's providence guides it in a special manner outwardly, and God's Spirit breathes through it all, with a grand unity of aspiration, to one central event. That there should be types in such a history is most natural. *Ker.*

When we come to the New Testament history, we find that a large part of this Old Testament historic record was intended to symbolize and shadow forth great historic truths of the future ; just as the ritualism of the Old Testament worship was designed to shadow forth the great ideas of the redemption in the future for faith to lay hold upon. The infinite mind who presides in all this history prearranging all with reference to the coming Messiah to assume humanity, so that not only in the institutions of worship of the old church were they taught to see the shadowing of great truths, but in the history of God's transaction all was fitted in like manner to foreshadow the coming of Christ. Of this pre-eminently is Lord Bacon's saying true : "History is prophecy." S. R.

**2. These are the generations of Jacob.** The *Toledoth*, or genealogical history of Isaac began (ch. 25 : 19) after the death of his father Abraham, a few verses having been allotted (vv. 12–18) to dispose of the history of his brother Ishmael. In the same manner, the *Toledoth* of Jacob are given in this chapter after the death of his father Isaac, ch. 36 having intervened to account for Esau and his family. Many of the preceding chapters had been occupied with the history of Jacob and his sons, but Jacob's *Toledoth* begin at this point, because now he has become the sole head and father of the chosen seed. The *Toledoth*, or family history, of Jacob continues now till his death.

**Joseph, being seventeen years old.** This history goes back a few years ; for Isaac must have been living when Joseph was seventeen. But the historian had fully wound up the history of Isaac before commencing the *Toledoth* of Jacob ; and he now gives unity to the history of the descent into Egypt by beginning with the adolescence of Joseph, his father's fondness for him, and his brothers' jealousy of him. E. H. B.

**3.** The Hebrew words mean simply, "a tunic reaching to the extremities." They describe a garment such as was commonly worn in Egypt and the adjacent lands—a long white linen robe extending to the ankles and wrists, and embroidered with a narrow stripe of color round the edge of the skirt and the sleeves. And if this white linen garment be but a poor substitute for the rich, gorgeous robe which has so long held its place in our thoughts, it has its compensations. For it helps us to understand the envy, the fierce murderous jealousy, of Joseph's brethren. That they should be moved to kill him, or even to sell him for a slave, because he wore a gay coat and went fine, is almost inconceivable ; but this long linen tunic meant more than a mere coat of many hues. It was worn, as a rule, only by the most noble and opulent classes, by kings' sons and daughters, by priests and scribes, by those who were exempt from manual labor. *Cox ——A full-length garment ;* covering the whole person, the body of the garment extending to the feet, and the

sleeves to the wrists. Such garments were worn only by persons exempted from manual labor, and were indicative of rank and wealth. The injudicious partiality of Jacob conferred this distinction on the favorite child of his old age. On the contrary, the ordinary dress, such as was worn by persons engaged in active employments, extended but a little below the knee, the sleeves reaching only to the elbow. T. J. C.

**4.** *Cou'd not bid peace to him.* The partiality of his father, exhibited in so weak a manner, provokes the anger of his brothers, who cannot bid him good-day, or greet him in the ordinary terms of good-will. M.——We are taught here the evil of favoritism in the family. The balance, as between the different children in the same household, must be held evenly by the parents. One may be brighter, or more amiable, or more companionable than another, but before the discipline of the family they ought to be *all* on a level. They are all alike children of the father, and should be dealt with by him on principles of the strictest equity. In some respects their differences of disposition will require differences of treatment, but they should be all kept on an equality. W. M. T.

**10.** Joseph's dream came true, though his white tunic was soon soiled with the sand of the desert pit and with the blood of the goat's kid. Joseph's dream came true, though it was fulfilled in a way and by means too wonderful for him to anticipate. Instead of simply succeeding to his father's inheritance, and ruling his eleven brethren, he stood next to Pharaoh, and governed busy, populous Egypt. His father and brothers did make obeisance unto him. Nay, the very sun and moon, which govern the tides and rains, and mete out years of famine and years of plenty, even these served him and helped him to the throne. Through the pit and the prison, by the path of sorrow and captivity, he rose to be the very centre of the world; for "all the world went down into Egypt to buy corn of Joseph." *Cox.*

**11. Envied him.** Envy is the breath of the old serpent. It is pure devil, as it is also purely spiritual. It needs no body, no concupiscent organization, no appetites or fleshly motions, no nerves even, for the exercise of its devilish energies. It is a soul-poison, yet acting fearfully upon the body itself, bringing more death into it than seemingly stronger and more tumultuous passions that have their nearer seat in the fleshly nature. It is "rottenness in the bones." T. L.

**Kept the saying in mind.** There is something very impressive in the silent thoughtfulness of Jacob. It is like the pondering in her heart by Mary of the things that were told her. This is the third time in which Jacob is introduced as thinking what he did not speak, but laid up in silence. It accords with the policy of his character. T. C.

**12-14.** By a remarkable combination of events and interweaving of their life-web by the hand of Providence, the opportunity is offered for the development of their hatred of Joseph by his brethren. The immense flocks of Jacob, combined with those of Isaac, his father, are too numerous to find pasturage in the vale of Hebron, where Isaac has always resided, and to which Jacob has come. Some larger provision must be made for pasturage. Nothing more natural than that Jacob should think of sending his flocks to his former range at foot of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, for there he had purchased most excellent land about a mile and a half from Shechem, and he would avail himself of its advantages. Perhaps it is now the latter part of summer, and the pastures in the south about Hebron are more parched than sixty miles north in the shady nooks and hills about Shechem. S. R.

**15-17.** Joseph found not his brethren at Shechem itself, but a stranger directed him to "*Dothan*," the two wells, whither they had gone. Dothan was beautifully situated, about twelve miles north from Samaria. Northward spread richest pasture-lands; a few swelling hills separated it from the great plain of Esdraelon. From its position it must have been the key to the passes of Esdraelon, and so, as guarding the entrance from the north, not only of Ephraim, but of Palestine itself. On the crest of one of those hills the extensive ruins of Dothan are still pointed out, and at its southern foot still wells up a fine spring of living water. From these hills Gideon afterward descended upon the host of Midian. It was here that Joseph overtook his brethren, and was cast into the dry well. And it was from that height that the sons of Jacob must have seen the Arab caravan slowly winding from Jordan on its way to Egypt, when they sold their brother, in the vain hope of binding the word and arresting the hand of God. A. E.

In the afternoon we came out upon a plain of rich meadow-land. It is a crescent-shaped plain, hill-encircled, unbroken by fence or hedge or wall. Not a house enlivens its broad, still expanse. On the farther side is a hill, steep, but not very high. At its foot is a grand well, with a building enclosing it. We look about us on well and plain with a rare delight. This

is Tell Dothan — the Dothan to which that Joseph whom we have loved ever since, in childhood, his story fell upon eager ears, wandered in search of his brethren. No wonder that the sons of Jacob led their flocks and herds hither, for it is a charming plain. The pasturage would suffice for even their thousands of sheep, of goats and cattle. Later in Jewish history Dothan appears as the residence of the prophet Elisha. Benhadad the Syrian encircled the hill with his army, that he might capture this troublesome prophet, but the host was smitten with confusion of sight and led away from Dothan to Samaria. The reply of Elisha to his terrified attendant, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them," has become one of the watchwords of the Christian life. It first rang bravely out at this Dothan. *Dulles.*

It is a striking illustration of how, when God has a general purpose to accomplish, as this sending Joseph into Egypt, he overrules and directs all the little things which as second causes operate to accomplish his purpose. Had these brethren of Joseph remained near Shechem they would probably not have accomplished their crime. They could not have so easily concealed it from their father. And no caravans to Egypt passed that way to offer a chance to sell him into slavery. Thus this incidental departure to Dothan was a mesh of the web. S. R.

**18. They conspired against him to slay him.** Envy has completed its work; now they coolly contemplate murder. **22.** Their plan meets opposition from an unexpected source. Reuben said, "Shed no blood; but cast him into this pit, that he might rid him out of their hands and deliver him to his father again." Reuben is the last of the ten from whom we would have expected mercy. His sincerity seems to be fully attested by his subsequent anguish, by his vivid remembrance of the painful incidents of this tragic scene and by his offer to assume the responsibility of Benjamin's safe return from Egypt. J. S. V.

Reuben, of all the brothers, had most reason to be jealous of Joseph, for he was the firstborn, and so entitled to those distinguishing favors which Jacob was conferring on Joseph; yet he proves his best friend. Reuben's temper seems to have been soft and effeminate, which had betrayed him to the sin of uncleanness; while the temper of the two next brothers, Simeon and Levi, was fierce, which betrayed them to the sin of murder, a sin which Reuben startled at the thought of. Our natural constitution should be guarded against those sins to which it is most inclinable, and improved (as Reuben's here) against those sins to which it is most averse. Reuben made a proposal which they thought would effectually answer *their* intention of destroying Joseph, and yet which he designed should answer *his* intention of rescuing Joseph out of their hands, and restoring him to his father, probably hoping thereby to recover his father's favor, which he had lately lost; but God overruled all to serve his own purpose of making Joseph an instrument to save much people alive. H.

Crime begets crime. Envy brought forth malice, deceit, lying, the intent of murder, and the kindred crime of man stealing. Such a fountain of iniquity is the heart of man! What a dreadful secret had these ten men to carry all their lives! And poor old Jacob!—his final retribution for the deception practised upon his brother comes in this cruel deception, that shall carry him mourning down into the grave! God, indeed, had better thoughts for him; but the guilt of men remains the same, however God may overrule it for good. As we cannot charge upon God our own evil-doings, neither can we credit ourselves with the good which God brings out of evil. J. P. T.

**24.** The numerous rock-hewn cisterns that are found everywhere would furnish a suitable pit in which they might have thrust him; and as these cisterns are shaped like a bottle, with a narrow mouth, it would be impossible for any one imprisoned within it to extricate himself without assistance. These cisterns are now all cracked and useless; they are, however, the most undoubted evidences that exist of the handiwork of the inhabitants in ancient times. *Lieut. Anderson.*

**25. They sat down to eat bread.** In this heartless meal Reuben can have taken no part. It appears from verse 29, that he must have left his brethren, perhaps with the very purpose of seeking means to rescue Joseph. The simplicity and truthfulness of the narrative are all the more apparent by the indifference of the writer to the question how and why it was that Reuben was absent at this point of the history. A forger would have been likely to tell all about it. E. H. B. —The heartless barbarity with which the brethren of Joseph sat down to eat and drink the very dainties he had brought them from his father, while they left him, as they thought, to starve, has been regarded by all later generations as the height of hard-hearted indifference. Amos, at a loss to describe the recklessness of his own genera-

tion, falls back upon this incident, and cries woe upon those "that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." *Dods.*

**27, 28.** Whatsoever they thought, God never meant that Joseph should perish in that pit; and therefore he sends very Ishmaelites, to ransom him from his brethren: the seed of him that persecuted his brother Isaac shall now redeem Joseph from his brethren's persecution. *Bp. H.*——There was much commerce between Egypt and Asia. The spices and resins so much used in Egypt for embalming were brought from the East. Slaves, too, were always in demand. The route of caravans crossing the Jordan at Beisan lay near Dothan; so that these Ishmaelitish traders naturally passed that way. Thus every incident of the narrative is verified by the geographical features of the country, and by the commercial customs of the times. J. P. T.

The same company of men in v. 27 are called "Ishmaelites," in v. 28, "Midianites," and in v. 36 (Hebrew), "Medanites;" this diversity of appellation being designed to intimate that they were a mixed people, made up of different races, and perhaps for that reason called in the Chaldean "Arabians," which signifies *mixed*. "Here," says Dr. Vincent (Com. and Nav. of the Anc.), "upon opening the oldest history in the world, we find the Ishmaelites from Gilead conducting a caravan loaded with the spices of India, the balsam and myrrh of Hadramaut; and in the regular course of their traffic proceeding to Egypt for a market. The date of this transaction is more than seventeen centuries before the Christian era, and notwithstanding its antiquity, it has all the genuine features of a caravan crossing the Desert at the present hour." The route of these Ishmaelites toward Egypt may be easily traced. They passed the Jordan, which is fordable in many places during the summer months, then took their way through the valley of Jezreel or Esdraelon, which lay but little northward from Dothan—a valley running from east to west, and leading from the Jordan, in the most convenient way, to the shores of the Mediterranean. Hence they could journey in the safest and most speedy manner to Egypt. *Bush.*

It is worth while to note specially here the remarkable undesigned coincidences and agreements of the record with the entire topography of the scene of this transaction, which Moses never saw, and with the facts developed by the recently discovered monuments of that era in Egypt. In the first place, on travelling over the country in which these events are recorded to have taken place, you will be struck with the exactness with which the history fits in with the entire topography of the country. Here is still Jacob's well and Shechem, and the fertile piece of ground, and here, following the tract of Joseph northward from it is Dothan; here are the pits or bottle-shaped wells, like Jacob's well, and dry in the late summer, into which Joseph was put, and so constructed that it would be impossible to get out without assistance, since they swell out to eight or nine feet in the middle. And here just at Dothan is the juncture of the narrow valleys leading north from Esdraelon, along which runs the highway from the East, between the plains of the Euphrates and the Nile. Nowhere but just along that line would any Ishmaelitish caravan have passed by to which they could sell a slave. And there to-day may be seen the long camel train passing east and west along the point of Gilboa, reminding one when seen in the distance of a long railway train, each camel led by a halter attached to the saddle of the one before it. And, on the other hand, on the monuments and in the paintings during this century, disentombed from the ruins of Egypt and collected in the galleries at London, Paris, Berlin, Cairo, are displayed the life and manners and customs of those ancient civilizations in Egypt, arranged according to their successive dynasties and ages, exhibiting precisely the same facts which this record implies Pictures of these very caravans of merchants coming from the East to Egypt, as their great mart; of slaves brought in with them, and slaves sent in as tribute from subject provinces; of slaves of all colors, at their various sorts of service—those such as the boy Joseph occupying business positions in their master's service, sturdy Africans doing the drudgery, Arab runners, etc. S. R.

Full little did Joseph think when he went to seek his brethren, that this was the last time he should see his father's house: full little did his brethren think when they sold him to the Ishmaelites, to have once seen him in the throne of Egypt. God's decree runs on; and, while we either think not of it or oppose it, is performed. *Bp. H.*——They thought that if he were sold for a slave, he would never be a lord, if sold into Egypt would never be *their* lord; yet all this was working toward it. The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain (Ps. 76 : 10). Joseph's brethren were wonderfully restrained from murdering him, and their selling him as wonderfully turned to God's praise. H.

From this history of Joseph, we might conclude that he was himself quite *passive* in the whole transaction. Yet when the brothers talk together upon this same subject many years afterward in Egypt, they say one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the *anguish of his soul when he besought us*, and we would not hear." These fervent entreaties are sunk in the direct history of the event, and only come out by accident after all. *Blunt.*

These brothers of Joseph were bent on making the realization of his dreams impossible, and yet the thing which they did was one step toward the bringing about of the elevation of their brother. They were made to see it afterward ; and they were working under no constraint. Nobody compelled them to give up their first idea of putting Joseph to death. The proposal to put him into a pit was purely spontaneous with Reuben, and they were at liberty to act upon it or not as they chose. The same thing was true of the suggestion of Judah about selling him to the Ishmaelites. Each party was seeking its own ends, and yet they were all contributing to bring about the purpose of God concerning Joseph. We cannot explain the "law" of it, but we clearly see the fact. Oh the marvellous wisdom of that providence of God which thus, without doing violence to the will of any human being, lays all their actions under tribute for the furtherance of its designs ! W. M. T.

**29. And Reuben returned unto the pit.** From this it is evident that Reuben was absent when Joseph was sold, and consequently did not consent at the time to the deed. He mourns bitterly on finding his plan defeated. Joseph is now lost to his father forever, and he pictures to himself the anguish of that new affliction which threatened to fall upon the good old man after the severe griefs which he had already sustained from his own misbehavior and that of his brethren. He pours out his bitter complaints to his hard-hearted brethren, but to little purpose. They could not well undo what was done, nor had they any wish to undo it. *Bush.*

*Reuben* intends to deliver Joseph from the vengeance of his brothers, and secretly to send him back to his father. Beside his natural kindliness, as the firstborn, Reuben would feel himself more particularly responsible to his father. *Judah* also wished to preserve the life of Joseph, but he agrees with his other brothers in deeming it necessary that he should be removed, so that thereby the possibility of having his dreams realized should be set aside. As they probably thought that the realization of these dreams was dependent on his investiture with the rights of primogeniture, it appeared the most sure means of attaining their object to sell him as a slave into a distant country. Thus, we conclude with *Ranke :* "The narrative has now reached the point when it seems as if the direct contrary of Joseph's former prophetic dreams should take place. He whose superiority his parents and brothers were to acknowledge, now lives as a slave in a foreign land." K.

**35. Daughters.** Of whom, besides Dinah, he perhaps had several. Daughters, when not the subjects of any remarkable history, are not enumerated in the genealogical register. *Gerl.*

**I will go down to the grave to my son mourning.** A more correct version is, "I will go down to my son mourning into Sheol." This is the first of the sixty-five instances in which the proper name *Sheol* occurs in the Old Testament. It is a precise equivalent of the Greek *Hades*, which is found ten times in the New Testament. The word never means *grave*, for which the Hebrew has a term uniformly used to denote the earthly receptacle of a dead body, but always the place of departed spirits, whether good or evil. It thus distinctly conveyed the idea of the soul's existence after death. The patriarch's conceptions of this unseen world were doubtless dim and vague, but he expected to meet Joseph there, and his use of the word is quite inconsistent with the notion that death is the extinction of the whole man. . . . According to Old Testament usage, *Sheol* (or Hades) was the receptacle of all the dead without exception. Thither went the patriarch Jacob, and thither also went such men as the unscrupulous Joab and the malignant Shimei (1 Kings 2 : 6-9). The primary idea is that it is the realm of the dead, and as such concentrates in itself whatever terror death has for man. Hence the combination of the two terms as in the 18th Psalm, "the sorrows of *Sheol* (Hades), and the snares of death" (comp. Ps. 116 : 3 ; Job 17 : 16 ; Prov. 5 : 5) And as natural death is a symbol of spiritual death, and images that remoteness from God, the fountain of life, which is the worst of all evils, so the region called *Sheol* (or Hades) came to be regarded as the place to which especially the ungodly belong (Ps. 9 : 17 ; 49 : 14). This accounts for the dread with which the Old Testament believers, such as David (Ps. 6 : 5) and Hezekiah (Is. 38 : 18), usually thought and spoke of it ; although in their better moments they had an

assured conviction that God would show them the path of life where there are pleasures forevermore (Ps. 16 : 11), that he would redeem them from *Sheol* (49 : 15), that after guiding them by his counsel here he would receive them to glory (73 ; 24), and therefore that even in death he was their portion forever (73 : 20). . . . The *grave* and the *p t* refer primarily to the body, and so miss the very point of Sheol, which refers to the spirit. The only safe way is to transliterate the word throughout, and then the English reader, studying all the passages in which it occurs, can arrive at his own conclusion as to its meaning. *Chambers.*

The noun "Sheol" is made from the verb Shaal, having the sense, to ask, to demand ; and conceives of the place as evermore demanding, insatiable ; that which is never full ; never has enough. The current Hebrew conceptions of the word may be seen in Prov. 30 : 15, 16, and Isa. 5 : 14. and Hab. 2 : 5. "There are three things that are never satisfied ; yea four say not, It is enough : the grave" (Sheol). "Therefore hell (Sheol) hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure ; and their glory, and their multitude and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it." "Who enlargeth his desire as hell" (Sheol) "and is as Death, and cannot be satisfied." As to the location of Sheol it seems clear that they thought of it as an *under-world*, as somehow beneath the surface of the earth. We see this in the case of Korah and his company (Num. 16 : 28–34), and in De. 32 : 22. In regard to their conceptions of Sheol as a state of being for the righteous and the wicked dead, it is easy to see that holy men of the oldest time lacked the clear light of the gospel age. H. C.

*The under-world.* By this term is meant (of course only in figurative conception) the abode of the departed, the world of spirits. It is conceived of as *beneath* (Is. 14 : 9), as *under the earth* (Rev. 5 : 3, 13 ; Philip. 2 : 10), as reached by *digging into it* (Amos 9 : 2) ; men are said to *go down* into it (Num. 16 : 33) ; its *depth below* is contrasted with the height of heaven above (Job 11 : 8). Such expressions are intended to accommodate what is said to common apprehension, and not to teach us anything respecting the *locality* of the abode of departed spirits. T. J. C.

[For a different view of the meaning of "Sheol," see Dr. Shedd's recent book, "Endless Punishment of the Wicked."]

Moses constantly spoke of the death of the godly patriarchs as a being "gathered to their people." He said this of Abraham (Gen. 25 : 8) ; of Ishmael (25 : 17) ; of Isaac (35 : 29) ; of Jacob (49 : 33). And he records these as Jacob's words when he supposed Joseph to have died : "I will go down into Sheol *to my son* mourning" (37 : 35). In the face of these facts can it be said that Moses knew nothing of the future life? Did he think the fathers—the righteous people—had passed by death into non-existence—into what was *not life* in any sense whatever? H. C.

**36. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt.** Hebrew, *the Medanites.* These were the descendants of Medan, the son of Abraham (Gen. 25 : 2). Both these and the Midianites seem to have lived intermingled with the Ishmaelites, by which general name they are called (v. 25). *Bush.*——Joseph's history belongs henceforth to a wider sphere. The glimpse of Egypt, opened to us for a moment in the life of Abraham, now spreads into a vast and permanent prospect. A. P. S.

We seem to have sufficient grounds for the belief that the Egypt of Joseph's time was that of the Middle Empire or Hyksos, an Asiatic people who held Egypt in subjection for some centuries before the great rising under Aahmes, which re-established a native dynasty upon the old throne of the Pharaohs. M. Chabas remarks that the Hyksos, or shepherd kings, after a time became "Egyptianized." "The science and the usages of Egypt introduced themselves among them. They surrounded themselves with learned men, built temples, encouraged statuary, while at the same time they inscribed their own names on the statues of the Old Empire, which were still standing, in the place of those of the Pharaohs who had erected them. It is this period of civilization which alone has left us the sphinxes, the statues, and the inscriptions which recall the art of Egypt ; the manners of the foreign conquerors had by this time been sensibly softened." And again, "Apepi, the last shepherd king, was an enlightened prince, who maintained a college of men skilled in sacred lore, after the example of the Pharaohs of every age, and submitted all matters of importance to them for examination before he formed any decision." The Pharaoh of Joseph, according to the Syncellus, was this very Apepi, the last shepherd king, the predecessor of the Aahmes, who, after a long and severe struggle, expelled the Hyksos, and reestablished in Egypt the rule of a native dynasty. G. R. (*"Babylon and Egypt"*).

By the time that Joseph was sold into Egypt there was little outward difference between the court at Zoan and the court of the native princes at Thebes. The very names and titles borne by

the Hyksos officials had become Egyptian ; and though they still regarded the god Set as the chief object of their worship, they had begun to rebuild the Egyptian temples and pay honor to the Egyptian deities. Potiphar, to whom Joseph was sold, bore a purely Egyptian name, meaning "the gift of the risen one," while the name of Potipherah, the high priest of On, whose daughter, Asenath, was married by Joseph, is equally Egyptian, and signifies "the gift of the Sun-God." The Sun-God was the special deity of On ; to him the great temple of the city was dedicated, and the name by which the place was known to the Greeks was Heliopolis, "the city of the sun." *Sayce.*

**Sold him.** The whole passage implies the existence in Egypt at this time of a traffic in slaves, who were foreigners, and valued at no very high rate. The monuments prove slaves to have been exceedingly numerous under the Ancient Empire. The king had a vast number ; the estates of the nobles were cultivated by them ; and a large body of *hieroduli*, or "sacred slaves," was attached to most of the temples. Foreign slaves seem to have been preferred to native ones, and wars were sometimes undertaken less with the object of conquest or subjugation than with that of obtaining a profit by selling those who were taken prisoners in the slave market. G. R.

## Section 66.

### POTIPHAR'S SLAVE. FALSELY ACCUSED AND IMPRISONED.

GENESIS 39 : 1-23.

1 AND Joseph was brought down to Egypt ; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain
of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hand of the Ishmaelites, which had brought
2 him down thither. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man ; and he
3 was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with
4 him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace
in his sight, and he ministered unto him : and he made him overseer over his house, and all
5 that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he made him over-
seer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for
Joseph's sake ; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had, in the house and in the
6 field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand ; and he knew not aught *that was* with
7 him, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was comely, and well favoured. And it
came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph ; and she
8 said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master know-
9 eth not what is with me in the house, and he hath put all that he hath into my hand ; there
is none greater in this house than I ; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee,
because thou art his wife : how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?
10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to
11 lie by her, *or* to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that he went into the
12 house to do his work ; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she
caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me : and he left his garment in her hand, and
13 fled, and got him out. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her
14 hand, and was fled forth, that she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them,
saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us ; he came in unto me to lie
15 with me, and I cried with a loud voice : and it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up
16 my voice and cried, that he left his garment by me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid
17 up his garment by her, until his master came home. And she spake unto him according to
these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me
18 to mock me : and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment
19 by me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife,
which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me ; that his wrath
20 was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, the place where
21 the king's prisoners were bound : and he was there in the prison. But the LORD was with
Joseph, and shewed kindness unto him, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the
22 prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were
23 in the prison ; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the
prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand, because the LORD was with him ; and
that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

**1-6.** *From a slave, Joseph is made overseer to Potiphar.* He was faithful, honest, upright, and conscientious, because in his earthly he served a heavenly Master, whose presence he always realized. Accordingly "Jehovah was with him," and "Jehovah made all that he did

to prosper in his hand." His master was not long in observing this. From an ordinary domestic slave he promoted him to be "overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand." The confidence was not misplaced. Jehovah's blessing henceforth rested upon Potiphar's substance, and he "left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught that he had, save the bread which he did eat." The sculptures and paintings of the ancient Egyptian tombs bring vividly before us the daily life and duties of Joseph. "The property of great men is shown to have been managed by scribes, who exercised a most methodical and minute supervision over all the operations of agriculture, gardening, the keeping of live stock, and fishing. Every product was carefully registered, to check the dishonesty of the laborers, who in Egypt have always been famous in this respect. Probably in no country was farming ever more systematic. Joseph's previous knowledge of tending flocks, and perhaps of husbandry, and his truthful character, exactly fitted him for the post of overseer. How long he filled it we are not told." (*Poole.*) A. E.

He who acknowledges God in all his ways has the promise that God shall direct all his steps. Joseph's captivity shall promote God's glory; and to this end, God works *in* him, *for* him, and *by* him. Even the irreligious can see when the Most High distinguishes his followers: Joseph's master saw *that Jehovah was with him.* A. C.——He saw that Joseph was the object of supernatural care and favor; and this Moses ascribes to its true source. **5. And it came to pass from the time.** The blessing of heaven previous to Joseph's advancement to the stewardship had rested more especially upon himself and his doings. He had been made to prosper in a signal manner, and Potiphar was constrained to acknowledge it. But now from this time the blessing of the Lord was upon Potiphar, upon all that he had, whether in the house or the field, but still for Joseph's sake. As Potiphar had shown himself disposed to favor the Lord's servant, the Lord will repay his kindness by blessing him. *Bush.*

Joseph came into Egypt soon after he was 17 (ch. 37 : 2); he was thirteen years in Potiphar's service and in prison —of these, more than two in prison. B.——**7-15.** Quite in contrast with the usual oriental custom, women were exempt from seclusion, and moved in society with apparently entire freedom. This appears in the family of Potiphar. The ancient sculptures and paintings found in their tombs give a very full view of the domestic life of the ancient Egyptians, no point of which is more striking than the high social position of woman and the entire absence of the harem system of seclusion. "The wife is called the lady of the house." According to the monuments the women in Egypt lived under far less restraint than in the East, or even in Greece. Wilkinson's Egypt is full of testimony to this point. (Hengstenberg's Moses, p. 24) H. C.

**7-10.** Joseph resists the daily solicitations of his master's wife. *None greater in this house than I.* He pleads the unreserved trust his master had reposed in him. He is bound by the law of honor, the law of chastity (*this great evil*), and the law of piety (*sin against God*). Joseph uses the common name of God in addressing this Egyptian. He could employ no higher pleas than the above. M.

Joseph's bearing in this case was worthy to be put on permanent record to pass down through all future generations to the end of time, a perfect model of both virtue and wisdom—the virtue that resists seductive temptation with unwavering firmness; and the wisdom that comprehends and applies the perfect methods of resisting temptation. Joseph did not dally with his tempter; did not suffer the temptation to gather new force, but met it instantly with the strongest considerations possible—"How can I do this great wickedness and *sin against God?*" The sense of a present God settled the question forever. There was indeed another line of consideration. Potiphar had trusted him most entirely; shall he abuse this trust? Never. Thus Joseph's course was at once decided. H. C.

All the spite of his brethren was not so great a cross to him as the inordinate affection of his mistress. Temptations on the right hand are now more perilous and hard to resist, by how much they are more plausible and glorious; but the heart that is bent upon God knows how to walk steadily and indifferently betwixt the pleasures of sin and fears of evil. He saw this pleasure would advance him; yet resolves to contemn: a good heart will rather lie in the dust, than rise by wickedness. "How shall I do this, and sin against God?" He knew that all the honors of Egypt could not buy off the guilt of one sin, and therefore abhors her company: he that will be safe from the acts of evil must wisely avoid the occasions. As sin ends ever in shame when it is committed, so it makes us past shame that we may commit it. *Bp. H.*——By the grace of God he was enabled to resist the fierce assault, and to baffle a plot against his innocence more formidable than the cruel machinations of his brethren against his life. He achieved a victory over himself, such as has seldom been witnessed in this fallen world. *Bush.*——Nothing can be nobler than a true and thorough manhood, where, amid the seductions of sense, the soul still retains the mastery of itself by retaining its loyalty to God. *Hamilton.*

**9. Sin against God.** The direct sin would have been against his master; but Joseph clearly recognized that the true guilt of all sin consists in its breach of the law, and disobedience to the will of God. E. H. B.——So did David, after his great sin, in his penitential utterance: "Against thee, *thee only*, have I sinned." B.

The sin he was tempted to, considering his youth, his beauty, his single state, and his plentiful living at the table of a ruler, was a sin which, one would think, might most easily beset him and betray him. The tempter was his mistress, whom it was his place to obey and his interest to oblige, whose favor would contribute more than anything to his preferment, and by whose means he might arrive at the highest honors of the court. On the other hand, it was at his utmost peril if he slighted her and made her his enemy. Opportunity favored the temptation. The tempter was in

the house with him ; his business led him to be, without any suspicion, where she was : none of the family were within, there appeared no danger of its being ever discovered, or, if it should be suspected, his mistress would protect him. To all this was added importunity, frequent constant importunity, to such a degree that at last she laid violent hands on him. His resistance of the temptation was very brave, and the victory truly honorable. The almighty grace of God enabled him to overcome this assault of the enemy. *How can I do this?* not only, *How shall I?* or *How dare I?* but *How can I?* "Not only sin against my master, my mistress, myself, my own body and soul ; but *against God?*" The worst thing in sin is that it is against God, against his nature and his dominion, against his love and his design. They that love God, for this reason hate sin. H.

What is his answer to the temptation? God! There is no other true answer. When the tempter comes we must take wing, and get away to God! There are temptations in life—temptations at every turning of the street—temptations in all the evolutions of daily circumstances—temptations that come suddenly, unexpectedly, flatteringly. There is no true, all-conquering, all-triumphant answer to the temptation of the devil but this,—*God!* He will deliver, if so be we put our trust in him. J. P.

The words to his master's wife, "*Can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" tell us that the child of the covenant believes the covenant. Away from the tents in which he has been brought up,—without any outward tokens to remind him of any lessons he has received there, in an hour of tremendous temptation,—he confesses a righteous Ruler, whom he is to obey ; he trusts in him, and does obey him ; he goes to prison for it. . . . We are in danger, when any great trial of our moral strength comes, of sinking ignominiously, if we have nothing better to rely upon than calculations of consequences, or religious terrors, or a sense of honor ; all which the gusts of passion may scatter to the winds. Be sure that nothing will avail but trust in a present Helper and Deliverer ; of One who cares more for us than we care for ourselves ; who will not suffer any who trust in Him and not in themselves, to fall from Him. *Maurice.*

**12.** This second time is Joseph stripped of his garment : before in the violence of envy, now of lust ; before of necessity, now of choice ; before to deceive his father, now his master ; for, behold, the pledge of his fidelity, which he left in those wicked hands, is made an evidence against him of that which he refused to do. Therefore did he leave his cloak, because he would not do that of which he is accused and condemned because he left it. What safety is there against great adversaries, when even arguments of innocence are used to convince of evil? Lust is a desperate madness when it is opposed ; no hatred burns so furiously as that which arises from the quenched coals of love. *Bp. Hall.*

**Joseph fled, and got him out.** To know *when* to *fight* and *when* to *fly*, are of great importance in the Christian life. Some temptations must be manfully met, resisted, and thus overcome : from others we must *fly*. He who stands to contend or reason is infallibly ruined. A. C.——There is but one thing which you have to fear in earth or heaven,—being untrue to your better selves, and therefore untrue to God. If you will not do the thing you know to be right, and say the thing you know to be true, then indeed you are weak. You are a coward, and sin against God, and suffer the penalty of your cowardice. You desert God, and therefore you cannot expect him to stand by you. *C. Kingsley.*——Not for what we can make by it, or for what it is worth, but for what it is, and for its relationship to God, let us do the right, and we may rest assured, however it may be now, that in the end we shall be on the winning side, for character is success—not position, not prosperity, not reputation—but character, and it is made and hardened and tempered in the fire of trial. Leave the reputation and the success, then, to look after themselves, and be not disconcerted if they should both be for a time under a cloud ; but look well to the CHARACTER, for that is the main thing, and the life that secures that for Christ is always worth living. W. M. T.

**14–18.** Inordinate desire is turned to revenge. She charges upon him the crime of which she herself was alone guilty, and she shows the evidence of his purity as the proof of his guilt. To appearances, the innocent one is the guilty ; the guilty one is the innocent. Accordingly Joseph is cast into prison. Potiphar's palace has crumbled to decay, and Potiphar's wife has long since entered a world where falsehood will not shield the guilty ; but slander still lives, and has its temporary triumphs. It seems to have a marvellous adaptation to all countries, to all ages, and to all states of society. Born of malice, fed on ruined reputations, clad in the stolen robes of virtue and polished into the likeness of a holy detestation of wrong-doing—slander, notwithstanding her innate loathsomeness, has attained a prominence which true goodness deplores exceedingly. As in Joseph's case, the virtue which vice cannot conquer it is almost certain to malign. J. S. V.

**20.** The incident is related because it formed a necessary link in the chain of circumstances that brought him before Pharaoh. And however strong his temptation may have been, more men would be found who could thus have spoken to Potiphar's wife, than who could have kept silence when accused by Potiphar. For his purity you will find his equal, one among a thousand ; for his mercy scarcely one. The word is on his tongue that can put a very different face on the matter, but rather than utter that word, Joseph will suffer the stroke that otherwise must fall on his master's honor. He is content to lie under the cruel suspicion that he had in the foulest way wronged the man whom most he should have regarded, and whom in point of fact he did enthusiastically serve. There was one man in Egypt whose good will he prized, and this man now scorned and condemned him, and this for the very act by which Joseph had proved most faithful and deserving. *Dods.*

**21–23.** The contrast could scarcely be greater than between his former prophetic dreams and his present condition. But even so Joseph re-

mained steadfast. And, as if to set before us the other contrast between sight and faith, the sacred text expressly states it: "But"—a word on which our faith should often lay emphasis—"Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." By and by, as his integrity more and more appeared, the charge of the prisoners was committed unto him; and as "what he did Jehovah made to prosper," the whole management of the prison ultimately passed into Joseph's hands. Thus, here also Jehovah proved Himself a faithful covenant-God. A silver streak was lining the dark cloud. But still must "patience have her perfect work." A E.

In the account of Joseph's imprisonment is given to us an explanation of one of the mysteries of this our human life. It is a mystery that often sinfulness and selfishness reap the prizes here, while goodness and integrity have to endure the ills of this life. It is as if we thought that the Everlasting rewarded the goodness of his servants as a foolish mother giving her child that which is pleasant to the taste. We do well, and suffer for it; and then we complain that we have not our reward in material prosperity. Shortly after his imprisonment, Joseph was released, his merit acknowledged, and almost regal dignity conferred upon him. Whereupon we say, "Now all is right, merit has its reward;" and with this poetical justice we are satisfied. But this is not the justice of God's world. Are *these*, then, the rewards of well-doing,—horses and carriages, the royal robe, and the knee bowed before him? Is it with these things, quite earthly, that the Everlasting rewards celestial qualities? Neither in this world nor in the world to come are these the rewards of goodness. What was Joseph's reward? Not the rank conferred upon him; but this—to be pure, to be haunted by no principle of remorse; to see God, to have the vision of the King in his beauty, to know and to feel that he is near. Think you that from this the dungeon could take much, and that to this his earthly honors could add anything? The reward of well-doing is God. *Robertson.*

The case of Joseph proves that all the suffering in this world *cannot be retribution for sin.* There may be great suffering which cannot in any true sense be the punishment of crime. Further, this case illustrates some of the ends which God aims to secure by permitting the sufferings of the good; *e.g.* to discipline them to patience under suffering, and to trust in God in the midst of darkness and in spite of it. Joseph's slavery and prison life in Egypt would have been simply miserable without this patience and this trust in the Lord his God. Everything in the future as before his eye was dark enough; but he knew there was a God of loving kindness above—a God who made no mistakes, yet whose purposes were often too deep for afflicted man to fathom, and therefore a God whom his children should learn to trust as certainly doing *all things* well.

Again; the case serves to reveal God's pity and his love in that he *goes with* his children into their slave-life and into their prison-life with such smiles of favor, such tokens of his presence, as may well make them joyful in the most terrible affliction. As Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises within the cold, desolate walls of a prison while yet smarting under the Roman scourge, and with perhaps some prospect of sufferings more severe when another day should dawn; so Joseph found the Lord with him when he reached Egypt a slave; with him when cast into prison because he virtuously repelled a temptation to crime. God was there, proving to his servant Joseph that no surroundings are so dark that God's manifested presence will not make them light—that no sufferings and no bereavements are so severe that God cannot throw his smile upon the sufferer and fill his soul with overflowing joy!

Yet again; this lesson teaches that God uses means apparently rough and stern to prepare his servants for higher responsibilities and more signal blessings. We cannot say what Joseph would have been if he had remained in the bosom of his father's home through all those years from seventeen to thirty, instead of being in God's school of suffering and trial; but it is safe to say that he made rapid strides forward in this school of God—in his knowledge of human nature; in his quick and manifest sympathy with every one in trouble; in his skill to gain the confidence of those about and above him; in his capacity for business; and not least in his living piety and his humble walk with God. His surroundings threw him roughly upon his own resources, and at the same time sweetly upon God's resources; in consequence he rose, as few men have even been fit to rise, from slave-life and prison-life, to be the actuary of a great kingdom—the almoner of bread and of life to the nations of the then civilized world; and also to become one of the most exalted and spotless characters of all history. Are not the ways of God truly wonderful? H. C.

## Section 67.

### DREAMS OF TWO IMPRISONED OFFICERS. THE EGYPT AND PHARAOH OF JOSEPH.

GENESIS 40 : 1–23.

1 AND it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker
2 offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against his two officers,
3 against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he ministered unto them : and
5 they continued a season in ward. And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream, in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the
6 baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison. And Joseph came in unto them
7 in the morning and saw them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in ward in his master's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?
8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell it me, I pray you.
9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine
10 was before me ; and in the vine were three branches : and it was as though it budded, *and* its
11 blossoms shot forth ; *and* the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes : and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand ; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the
12 cup into Pharaoh's hand. And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it : the
13 three branches are three days ; within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thine office : and thou shalt give Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the
14 former manner when thou wast his butler. But have me in thy remembrance when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pha-
15 raoh, and bring me out of this house : for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews : and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.
16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in
17 my dream, and, behold, three baskets of white bread were on my head : and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh ; and the birds did eat them out of
18 the basket upon my head. And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof :
19 the three baskets are three days ; within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off
20 thee, and shall hang thee on a tree ; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee. And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants : and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and the head of the chief baker among
21 his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again ; and he gave the
22 cup into Pharaoh's hand : but he hanged the chief baker : as Joseph had interpreted to them.
23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him.

View this interesting life as you may, study it at any point, and the truth uttered by David must appear to your mind : "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way." In no life could the hand of God be more visible, for it leads him through some of the most trying experiences that ever befell a mortal ; and yet every experience, however bitter, seems only a rugged path to greater heights and grander associations. Nor was all this mere chance. Look at his life closely and you will see, from beginning to end, that it was one of conformity to the ways of God—that the rule of right was that by which it was governed. *S. T. Grahon.*

There was nothing beyond the ordinary processes of nature, as far as human observation can extend, in the circumstances which led to the imprisonment of Joseph, and to that of Pharaoh's butler and baker. And there is as little of the sensibly marvellous in the restorative process which took the butler and baker out of prison, as in the former process which carried them there—though it was a determining Providence which fixed every footstep of both. There was nothing beyond the ordinary play of interests and passions in a court that any common observer could have discerned—in the birthday feast, or in the restoration of the butler, or in the execution of the baker, or lastly, in the forgetful ingratitude of the butler. T. C.——At many critical points Joseph's life touches the lives of others, and is thereby carried so much the further forward toward the attainment by him of the place which God was preparing for him. Yet Joseph, if he had chosen to act otherwise than he did, might have thrown away all the opportunities which these places of junction in his life afforded him. But he fell in with God's plan. He could see the chance—speaking after the manner of men—when it came, and could use it to the highest advantage. And by all this he was steadily preparing himself for the place which God in his plan was preparing for him. Then Providence is not fatalism, and if you would avail yourself of the opportunities which God furnishes at the critical turnings of your history, watch your character, and seek so to meet everything as from him, and so to serve him in everything, that when the important time arrives you can recognize its value, and improve it for his glory in your own advancement. The men that fail in life do not fail for want of such opportunities as Joseph had, but for want of the character to see these opportunities, and the ability to use them. Keep near to God, form your character according to his principles, and then you will find a way to serve him, and will feel that somehow you are on the road to your success, and in training for your sphere. W. M. T.

If the special intentions of Providence toward individuals were effected by the aid of supernatural interpositions, the power and presence of the Supreme Disposer might indeed be more strikingly displayed ; but his skill much less. And herein especially is manifested the perfection of the Divine wisdom, that the most surprising conjunctions of events are brought about by the simplest means, and in a manner that is perfectly in harmony with the ordinary course of human affairs. This is in fact the great miracle of providence—that no miracles are needed to accomplish its purposes. Countless series of events are travelling on from remote quarters toward the same point ; and each series moves in the beaten track of ordinary occurrences ; but their intersection, at the very moment in which they meet, shall serve, per-

haps, to give a new direction to the affairs of an empire. The *materials* of the machinery of providence are all of ordinary quality ; but their combination displays nothing less than infinite skill. I. T.

**1-4.** We should not have had this story of Pharaoh's butler and baker recorded in Scripture, if it had not been serviceable to Joseph's preferment. The world stands for the sake of the church, and is governed for its good. H.

**4.** These high officers of state (for such they were, in accordance with Oriental usage ; compare the case of Nehemiah, Neh. 2 : 1-9) were treated with the consideration due to their rank, while the issue of their arrest was pending. The captain of the life-guard himself assigned Joseph as their personal attendant. T. J. C.——Joseph had now ample opportunity for acquiring information which afterward stood him in good stead for apprehending the character of Pharaoh, and for making himself acquainted with many details of his government, and with the general condition of the people. Officials in disgrace would be found much more accessible and much more communicative of important information than officials in court favor could have been to one in Joseph's position. *Dods.*

**5.** It is easy to ascertain the point of connection for the dreams of these two captives. They knew that Pharaoh's birthday was to be in three days, and from the analogy of former experiences, they would anticipate that their fate would then probably be decided. Falling asleep with such thoughts, wishes, hopes, and fears, their dreams were only a continuation of their waking thinking, when the power of anticipation, awakened while the external senses were asleep, descended into their thoughts. Conscience may also have had a part in giving its peculiar cast to each of the dreams. K.

**8. Tell it me, I pray you.** Joseph was conscious of an extraordinary prophetic impulse upon his spirit, enabling him to act the part of an interpreter. Yet he required that the dreams should first be made known to him. God could easily have saved him the trouble of learning from the men what they had dreamed. The same Spirit that taught him to interpret could have made known to him the dreams, as we know was the case with Daniel in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. But in this instance the dreams had not been forgotten by the dreamers, and God does not impart that knowledge supernaturally which can be acquired by the ordinary methods. It was sufficient for Joseph to be enabled to show the meaning of the dreams when informed what they were. *Bush.*

Joseph in becoming the interpreter of the dreams of other men became the fulfiller of his own. Had he made light of the dreams of his fellow-prisoners because he had already made light of his own, he would, for aught we can see, have died in the dungeon. And, indeed, what hope is left for a man, and what deliverance is possible, when he makes light of his own most sacred experience, and doubts whether after all there was any Divine voice in that part of his life which once he felt to be full of significance? We cannot but leave behind us many "childish things," beliefs that we now recognize as mere superstitions, hopes and fears which do not move the maturer mind. But when a supposed advance in the knowledge of things spiritual robs us of all that sustains true spiritual life in us, and begets contempt of our own past experience ; when it ministers not at all to the growth in us of what is tender and pure and loving and progressive, we cannot but question whether it is not a delusion rather than a truth that has taken possession of us. *Dods.*

**9-17.** When they heard his words of sympathy, the dreamers told him their visions. The dream of each rooted itself in and grew out of his former occupation, and they are illustrated in almost every particular by the representations found in these later years on the Egyptian monuments.

**14, 15.** The dream of the cup-bearer was interpreted by Joseph to mean that within three days he would be restored to his office ; and, showing the implicitness of his faith in the truth of the revelation, he accompanied his explanation with this pathetic statement and wistful request--"But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house ; for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon." Ah! yes, captivity is still captivity, though the slave be set over other slaves ; a prison is still a prison, though the prisoner be intrusted in it with the charge of others ; and this plaintive appeal lets us see deep down in Joseph's heart to the very quick of his distress. W. M. T. ——He does not reflect upon his brethren that sold him, he only says, *I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews*, that is, unjustly sent *away* thence, no matter where the fault was. Nor does he reflect on the wrong done him in this imprisonment by his mistress that was his prosecutrix, and his master that was his judge ; but mildly avers his own innocence : *Here have I done nothing, that they should put me into the dungeon.* H.

In Psalm 105, ver. 17-19, we read : "He sent a man before them : Joseph was sold for a slave. *They tormented his feet with fetters ; his soul came into iron*, until the time when his word came ; the word of the Lord cleared him." The road to the throne lay through the prison ; and but for the hateful fetters which tormented Joseph, he would never have worn the signet from Pharaoh's hand, nor the golden chain which Pharaoh flung round his neck. From ruling the state prison, he was called to rule the state. "The word of the Lord cleared him," and all the bright dreams of his youth were outdone. He learned by happy experience, that the great Ruler of men is no austere capricious tyrant, but a most just and gracious Lord. With his good he overcame the evil that was in his brethren, turning their hatred to love and self-reproach. The night in which he sat ushered in a long and brilliant day. If his fetters tormented him, it was only that he might grow perfect through suffering : *if the iron entered into his soul, it was only that it might make him strong.*

It would seem, indeed, to be a law of the Divine government, that in proportion as men are

great in capacities for service, they should have their capacities developed by bitter and long-sustained afflictions. "The poets learn in suffering what they teach in song." It is almost impossible to recall a teacher or saint of ancient times whose earlier years were not familiar with sorrow and defeat, who was not hampered and obstructed on every side from the very moment in which he set himself to teach a new truth, or to enforce a purer morality. Patriarchs, prophets, psalmists, apostles were all tormented with these fetters, and felt the iron of them in their very souls. It is a good thing to *have* iron in the soul, although to *get* it there involves so great a pain. Iron in the soul is as requisite as iron in the blood, as indispensable to spiritual strength as to physical health, if by "iron" we understand, as we may, the manly hardness which can endure the blows of adverse circumstance, the shocks of change. We can be patient and hopeful when once we are assured that all our defeats and disappointments, our failures and reverses and broken illusions, are parts of the discipline by which God is training us for the work we long to do, and are qualifying us to enjoy the freedom we crave. If only our character is being moulded and hardened, and its capacities brought out by suffering, then it is not unjust of God to inflict suffering upon us. It is not unjust, although we have not deserved the suffering, nor can ever deserve it: it is most tender and gracious, since He who is afflicted in all our afflictions will be very sure not to lay upon us more than we are able to bear, and is thus preparing us to be and do all that we most desire to do and be. If we can become perfect only through suffering, shall we not thank Him for the suffering which perfects us? If only as we learn to rule in the prison of deferred opportunities and defeated hopes, we can become fit to rule over the "many cities" of the heavenly kingdom, shall we shrink from the prison which leads to the throne? If the iron *must* enter our souls that we may be strong amid the flatteries and the adversities of fortune, shall even the fetters which torment us be unwelcome to us? If the world wants iron dukes and iron men, God wants iron saints, and therefore he suffers the iron to enter into their souls. *Cox.*

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Egyptian history is divided into three grand epochs. The *old empire*, from Menes till the invasion of the Shepherd kings; the *middle empire*, continuing while the Hyksos held possession of Lower Egypt; and the *new empire*, dating from the expulsion of the Shepherds, when all Egypt was reunited under the resplendent eighteenth dynasty of Thebes. Egypt, so long enveloped in a mystery as deep as that which surrounds the sphinx, has at length a history: and her stone-engraved monuments are the living chroniclers of her mighty Past. In Thebes are the yet fresh and legible monuments of a city that had stood for sixteen centuries, when Rome was founded; that for thirteen hundred years before David ascended the throne of Israel in Jerusalem, had furnished the major part of the sovereigns of one of the greatest empires of the world; that was at least eight centuries old when Cecrops founded Athens; that had existed full four hundred years when Abraham pitched his tent upon the mountain of Bethel. If not the oldest ruin in the world—for it disputes with Nineveh the palm of antiquity—it is the grandest and the best preserved memorial of ancient times. But Thebes is not merely a mighty *ruin* of the past. It is also a *history*, and from the hieroglyphics of its temples and the sculptured chambers of its royal sepulchres, it proclaims the great events of that dim antiquity concerning which we have no written record, but the fragmentary memorials of the book of Genesis. This rude history, carved in granite to commemorate the exploits of kings, and to transmit their names and deeds with the imperishable sarcophagi of their embalmed dust, now interpreted by the skill of learned men, brings incidental confirmation to the history of the Old Testament, and nowhere contradicts that history. Each temple, each palace, each obelisk, each tomb in Egypt, is not only a monument, but a history of an individual and his times, or of the nation at large. Deep in the face of the imperishable granite or of the firm sandstone that enters into the structure of nearly every building and monument, are graven the names or titles of kings, their own full-length portraits, and the leading events of their reigns, in battle scenes, coronation ceremonies, religious and civil processions,—a pictorial history of each monarch, with the manners and customs of the people. These sculptures, unimpaired by moisture or by the growth of lichens, in a climate of almost perpetual drought, and in some instances protected by the fine sand that has drifted in upon them from the desert, retain much of their original freshness, and are far more clean, legible, and sharply defined, than sculptures of a few hundred years ago upon the ruined abbeys, monasteries, and cathedrals of England and Scotland. The sculptures and pictures upon the walls of tombs hewn from limestone rock, and protected from dampness by the absence of rain and of vegetable growth, likewise retain in form and in coloring a distinctness that makes them the speaking witnesses of buried generations. From these records of stone must we learn the history of Egypt, unwritten in books. J. P. T.

The key to the ancient Egyptian language is the celebrated Rosetta stone, a slab of black marble, found by the French in 1799 near the mouth of the Rosetta branch of the Nile, and now in the British Museum. It contains a decree, written in sacred, enchorial, and Greek characters, respecting the coronation of PTOLEMY V. EPIPHANES. *Dic. B.*

About two hundred years after the time of Abraham, the history of JOSEPH brings Egypt under review, with a pictorial vividness which has its parallel in no other record for at least more than a thousand years. When we combine the scattered references in the later chapters of Genesis, they represent a remarkably compact organization. The light falls on no strictly primitive people, nor barbarous customs, but on a very highly civilized community, skilled in agriculture, social in habit, and accomplished in various branches of art. The monarchy which we noted in Abraham's time continues, and the king still bears the title of

Pharaoh. He is absolute, or nearly so, committing men to prison, and releasing them; or, if he please, ordering their executions, appointing officers over the whole land, and taxing it apparently at his pleasure; raising a foreigner suddenly to the second position in the kingdom, and requiring all, without exception, to render him obedience. "At the same time, the king has counsellors, or ministers, elders of his house, and others whose advice he asks, and without whose sanction he does not seem to act in important matters." He had a body-guard under "a captain" a "chief confectioner," a "chief cup-bearer." He rides in a chariot, and all pay him homage. There are distinct classes of soldiers, priests, physicians, sacred scribes, magicians, and herdsmen. As betokening the stage of civilization which had been reached, there is mention made of fine linen, golden chains, silver drinking-cups, wagons, chariots, embalming, and coffins. In addition to these glimpses, we have it stated that they carried burdens on the head; that they sat at meat, and did not recline, as was the common custom in the East; and that "every shepherd was an abomination unto the Egyptians." All these peculiarities are fully represented in the monuments but especially is the last made prominent. Sir J. G. Wilkinson tells us that the artists delighted on all occasions in representing the shepherds as "dirty and unshaven;" and that, on the tombs near the Pyramids of Geezeh, they are "caricatured as a deformed and unseemly race." *W. Fraser.*——It may be broadly stated that, in this entire description, there is not a single fraction which is not in harmony with what we know of the Egypt of this remote period from other sources. Nay, more, almost every point in it is confirmed, either by the classical writers, by the monuments, or by both. G. R.

All agree in considering that one great landmark in Egyptian history is the invasion and dominion of the Hyksos or Shepherd kings, and that another is the overthrow and expulsion of these usurpers. The most eminent authorities designate the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth dynasties as those of the Shepherds. With the eighteenth a new epoch was inaugurated; and as the Pharaoh of the time of the Exodus is now by most identified with Meneptah, son of Rameses II., of the nineteenth dynasty, the Pharaoh of Joseph is supposed to be one of the kings of the seventeenth dynasty, whose date is in the later part of the Shepherd dominion. Joseph would thus be raised to his position as governor of Egypt by a king who, though himself a foreigner, and able to appreciate foreign merit, was one of those who had, as the result of the long sojourn of his people in the land, adopted Egyptian titles and usages, and the king, "who knew not Joseph," may have belonged to the new dynasty by whom the Shepherds were expelled. W. M. T.

*The Pharaoh of* JOSEPH was a despotic monarch, ruling all Egypt, who followed Egyptian customs, but did not hesitate to set them aside when he thought fit; who seems to have desired to gain complete power over the Egyptians: and who favored strangers. These particulars support the idea that he was an Egyptianized foreigner rather than an Egyptian. If we turn to the old view that Joseph's Pharaoh was one of the Shepherd kings, we are struck with the fitness of all the circumstances of the Biblical narrative. It is stated by Eusebius that the Pharaoh to whom Jacob came was the Shepherd Apophis. Apophis belonged to the fifteenth dynasty, which was certainly of Shepherds, and the most powerful foreign line. This dynasty, according to Mr. Poole's view of Egyptian chronology, ruled for either 284 years (Africanus), or 259 years 10 months (Josephus), from about B.C. 2080. According to Hales's chronology, which Mr. Poole would slightly modify, Joseph's government fell under this dynasty, commencing about B.C. 1876, during the reign of the last but one or perhaps the last king of the dynasty, possibly in the time of Apophis, who ended the line according to Africanus. This dynasty is said to have been of Phœnicians. This king Mr. Poole regards as having reigned from Joseph's appointment (or, perhaps, somewhat earlier) until Jacob's death, at least twenty-six years, from B.C. about 1876 to 1850, and as having been the fifth or sixth king of the fifteenth dynasty. *Dic. B.*

Apepi (Apophis) was the last monarch of the Hyksos line (or Shepherds), probably Hittites. The best modern authorities think it in the highest degree probable that it was Apepi who made the gifted Hebrew (Joseph) his prime-minister, and who invited Jacob and his sons to settle in Egypt. . . . The Hyksos monarchs fixed their residence in the Delta itself; they selected Tanis—an ancient Egyptian town of considerable importance—for the main seat of their court. While maintaining a great fortified camp at Avaris, on their eastern frontier, where they lived sometimes, they still more favored the quiet Egyptian city on the Tanitic branch of the Nile, where they could pass their time away from the sound of arms, amid ancient temples and sanctuaries dedicated to various Egyptian gods, which they allowed to stand, if they did not even use them for their own worship. The Delta had never previously been the residence of Egyptian kings, and it did not again become their residence until the time of the nineteenth dynasty, shortly before the Exodus. Another peculiarity of the Hyksos period, belonging especially to its later portion, is to be found in the religious views professed, proclaimed, and enjoined upon subject princes. Apepi, according to the MS. known as "the First Sallier papyrus," made a great movement in Lower Egypt in favor of monotheism. Whereas previously the shepherd kings had allowed among their subjects, if they had not even practised themselves, the worship of a multitude of gods, Apepi "took to himself" a single god "for lord, refusing to serve any other god in the whole land." According to the Egyptian writer of the MS., the name under which he worshipped his god was "Sutech," who among the Hittites seems to have been equivalent to Baal, and was certainly a sun-god, probably identified with the material sun itself, but viewed as having also a spiritual nature, and as the creator and sustainer of the universe. Apepi's great temple of Sutech at Tanis was the natural outcome of his exclusive worship of this god, and showed forth in a tangible and conspicuous form the earnestness of his piety. G. R.

It is now certain that the narrative of the history of Joseph and the sojourn and exodus of the Israelites—that is to say, the portion from Genesis 39 to Exodus 15—so far as it relates to Egypt, is substantially not much later than B.C. 1300 ; in other words, was written while the memory of the events was fresh. The minute accuracy of the text is inconsistent with any later date. It is not merely that it shows knowledge of Egypt, but knowledge of Egypt under the Ramessides and yet earlier. The condition of the country, the chief cities of the frontier, the composition of the army, are true of the age of the Ramessides, and not true of the age of the Pharaohs, contemporary with Solomon and his successors. If the Hebrew documents are of the close of the period of the kings of Judah, how is it that they are true of the earlier condition, not of that which was contemporary with those kings? Why is the Egypt of the law markedly different from the Egypt of the prophets, each condition being described consistently with its Egyptian records, themselves contemporary with the events? Why is Egypt described in the Law as one kingdom, and no hint given of the break-up of the Empire into the small principalities mentioned by Isaiah (19 : 2)? Why do the proper names belong to the Ramesside and earlier age, without a single instance of those Semitic names which came into fashion with the Bubastic line in Solomon's time? Why do Zoan-Rameses and Zoar take the places of Migdol and Tahpanhes? Why are the foreign mercenaries, such as the Lubrin, spoken of in the constitution of Egyptian armies in the time of the kingdom of Judah, wholly unmentioned? The relations of Egypt with foreign countries are not less characteristic. The kingdom of Ethiopia, which overshadowed Egypt from before Hezekiah's time and throughout his reign, is unmentioned in the earlier documents. The earlier Asyrian Empire, which rose for a time on the fall of the Egyptian, nowhere appears.

These agreements have not failed to strike foreign Egyptologists who have no theological bias. These independent scholars, without actually formulating any view of the date of the greater part of the Pentateuch, appear uniformly to treat its text as an authority to be cited side by side with the Egyptian monuments. So Lepsius, in his researches on the date of the Exodus, and Brugsch, in his discussion of the route, and Chabas, in his paper on Rameses and Pithan. Of course it would be unfair to implicate any one of these scholars in the inferences expressed above ; but, at the same time, it is impossible that they can, for instance, hold Kuenen's theories of the date of the Pentateuch, so far as the part relating to Egypt is concerned. They have taken the two sets of documents—Hebrew and Egyptian—side by side, and in the working of elaborate problems found everything consistent with accuracy on both sides ; and of course accuracy would not be maintained in a tradition handed down through several centuries. If the large portion of the Pentateuch relating to the Egyptian period of Hebrew history, including as it does Elohistic as well as Jehovistic sections, is of the remote antiquity here claimed for it, no one can doubt that the first four books of Moses are substantially of the same age. *R. S. Poole.*

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# Section 68.

## DREAMS OF PHARAOH. ELEVATION OF JOSEPH. YEARS OF PLENTY.

GENESIS 41 : 1–57.

1 AND it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed : and, behold, he
2 stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, well favoured and
3 fatfleshed ; and they fed in the reed-grass. And, behold, seven other kine came up after
them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed ; and stood by the other kine upon the brink
4 of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and
5 fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed a second time : and, behold, seven
6 ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven ears, thin and
7 blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them. And the thin ears swallowed up the seven
8 rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream. And it came to pass
in the morning that his spirit was troubled ; and he sent and called for all the magicians of
Egypt, and all the wise men thereof : and Pharaoh told them his dream ; but there was none
9 that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying,
10 I do remember my faults this day : Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward
11 in the house of the captain of the guard, me and the chief baker : and we dreamed a dream
in one night, I and he ; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 And there was with us there a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard ;
and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams ; to each man according to his dream
13 he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was ; me he restored
14 unto mine office, and him he hanged. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought
him hastily out of the dungeon : and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came
15 in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is
none that can interpret it : and I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream
16 thou canst interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me : God shall
17 give Pharaoh an answer of peace. And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I
18 stood upon the brink of the river : and, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine,
19 fatfleshed and well favoured ; and they fed in the reed-grass : and, behold, seven other kine
came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the
20 land of Egypt for badness : and the lean and ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat
21 kine : and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them ;
22 but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream,
23 and, behold, seven ears came up upon one stalk, full and good : and, behold, seven ears,
24 withered, thin, *and* blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them : and the thin ears
swallowed up the seven good ears : and I told it unto the magicians ; but there was none that
25 could declare it to me. And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one : what
26 God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh. The seven good kine are seven years ;
27 and the seven good ears are seven years : the dream is one. And the seven lean and ill
favoured kine that came up after them are seven years, and also the seven empty ears blasted
28 with the east wind ; they shall be seven years of famine. That is the thing which I spake
29 unto Pharaoh : what God is about to do he hath shewed unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come
30 seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt : and there shall arise after them
seven years of famine ; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt ; and the
31 famine shall consume the land ; and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of
32 that famine which followeth ; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was
doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is established by God, and God will
33 shortly bring it to pass. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set
34 him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint overseers over the
35 land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let
them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of
36 Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. And the food shall be for a store to the
land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt ; that the land
37 perish not through the famine. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the
38 eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this,
39 a man in whom the spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God
40 hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou : thou shalt be over my
house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled : only in the throne will I be
41 greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of
42 Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand,
43 and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck ; and he made
him to ride in the second chariot which he had ; and they cried before him, Bow the knee :
44 and he set him over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh,
45 and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. And
Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah ; and he gave him to wife Asenath the
46 daughter of Poti-phera priest of On. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt. And
Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went
47 out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. And in the
48 seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food
of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities : the
49 food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph laid
up corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering ; for it was without num-
50 ber. And unto Joseph were born two sons before the year of famine came, which Asenath
51 the daughter of Poti-phera priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the
firstborn Manasseh : For, *said he*, God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's

52 house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim : For God hath made me fruitful in
53 the land of my affliction. And the seven years of plenty, that was in the land of Egypt, came
54 to an end. And the seven years of famine began to come, according as Joseph had said : and
55 there was famine in all lands ; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. And when all
the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread ; and Pharaoh said
56 unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph ; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over
all the face of the earth : and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyp-
57 tians ; and the famine was sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to
Joseph for to buy corn ; because the famine was sore in all the earth.

**1-36.** Joseph remained in prison two years longer, forgotten by the released cup-bearer, when Pharaoh was disturbed by dreams which none of the scribes or wise men of Egypt could interpret. Then the chief cup-bearer remembered his fault, and told Pharaoh of Joseph, who was brought out of prison, and set before the king. After bearing witness to the true God, as in the former case, by ascribing all the power of interpretation to him who had sent the dreams, he explained to Pharaoh their significance, which to an Egyptian was most striking. The dream had been twofold, to mark its certain and speedy fulfilment. Seven years of an abundance extraordinary even for fruitful Egypt were to be followed by seven years of still more extraordinary dearth. In the first dream, the seven years of plenty were denoted by seven heifers, the sacred symbols of Isis, the goddess of production, which came up out of the river, the great fertilizer of Egypt, whose very soil is well called by Herodotus "the gift of the Nile." These were beautiful and fat, as they fed on the luxuriant marsh-grass by the river's bank ; but after them came up seven others, so ill looking and lean that Pharaoh had never seen the like for badness, which devoured the seven fat kine, and remained as lean as they were before. The second dream was still plainer. There sprang up a stalk of that branching Egyptian wheat which now grows in our own fields from seed found in mummy-cases. That seen by Pharaoh had the unusual number of seven ears, full and good, denoting the seven years of plenty. Then there sprang up another stalk, also bearing seven ears, thin and blasted with the east wind, and so mildewed that they infected and consumed the seven good ears. Joseph went further, and counselled Pharaoh to give some discreet person authority over all the land, that he might store up the surplus corn of the seven years of plenty against the seven years of famine. P. S.

**1-45.** God cannot neglect his own, least of all in their sorrows. After two years more of Joseph's patience, that God who caused him to be lifted out of the former pit to be sold now calls him out of the dungeon to honor. He now puts a dream into the head of Pharaoh : he puts the remembrance of Joseph's skill into the head of the cup-bearer ; who to pleasure Pharaoh, not to requite Joseph, commends the prisoner for an interpreter ; he puts an interpretation in the mouth of Joseph : he puts into the heart of Pharaoh this choice of a miserable prisoner, to make him the ruler of Egypt. Behold : one hour hath changed his fetters into a chain of gold, his jail into a palace, Potiphar's captive into his master's lord, the noise of his chains into "Bow the knee." He who refused the allurements of the wife of Potiphar had now given him to his wife the daughter of Potipherah. Humility goes before honor ; serving and suffering are the best tutors to government. How well are God's children paid for their patience ! How happy are the issues of the faithful ! *Bp. H.*

**1. At the end of two full years.** For two full years after the restoration of the cup-bearer to his office Joseph remained in the prison, occupying the position to which, for his trustworthiness and integrity, he had been raised. Although this delay was due to the ungrateful forgetfulness of the man to whom he had shown so much kindness, and for whose intercession with the monarch he had so touchingly made request ; yet the overruling providence of God is clearly seen in the occasion and the time at which Joseph's services were recalled to the remembrance of the butler, and brought by him to the notice of the king. W. M. T.

We have need of patience, not only *bearing*, but *waiting* patience. Joseph lay in prison until the time that his word came (Ps. 105 : 19). There is a time set for the deliverance of God's people ; that time will come, though it seem to tarry ; and when it comes, it will appear to have been the best time, and therefore we ought to wait for it. H.——By those years of prison life, as well as by the privations which preceded, Joseph's character was steadied into strength and ripened into maturity, so that when his opportunity came he used it with effect. They did for him what his forty years in Midian did

for Moses, and his eighteen months in Arabia did for Paul. They threw him in upon himself, and back upon God. They disciplined him into calm self-possession, because they gave him a strong hold upon Jehovah. W. M. T. ——As things turned out, it was well for Joseph that his friend did forget him. For, supposing the chief butler had overcome his natural reluctance to increase his own indebtedness to Pharaoh by interceding for a friend, and supposing Pharaoh had been willing to listen to him, what would have been the result? Probably that Joseph might have received his liberty, and a free pass out of Egypt. In any probable case his career would have tended rather toward obscurity than toward the fulfilment of his dreams. *Dods.*

**2–7.** The particulars of the dreams are all singularly appropriate. The scene is by the Nile, on which depends all the plenty of Egypt. The kine and the corn respectively denote the animal and the vegetable products of the country. The cattle feeding in the reed-grass showed that the Nile was fertilizing the land and supporting the life of the beasts. The lean cattle and the scorched-up corn foreshadowed a time when the Nile, for some reason, ceased to irrigate the land. The swallowing up of the fat by the lean signified that the produce of the seven years of plenty would be all consumed in the seven years of scarcity. E. H. B.

The first dream is clothed in striking Egyptian emblematic figures. Egypt is the offspring of the Nile. The fertility of the land is yearly renewed by its overflowings. The cow is a very ancient emblem of the land, and of the earth generally, and was worshipped among the Egyptians as the goddess Isis. The Nile, Osiris, is honored under the form of a bull. *Gerl.*

That the number of the cows should have been seven is a singular touch of true local coloring, recognized only within a few years, but affording a striking proof of the exactness of the whole incident in its illustration of Egyptian modes of thought and life. Isis is often seen associated with seven cows ; a mystical number represented by the same word in Egyptian, Hebrew, and Sanscrit. So, also, Osiris is at times represented as attended by seven cows, his wives. At the summer solstice a cow was led seven times round his temple. That those in the dream should have been bathing in the Nile is, moreover, only a reproduction of paintings often seen on the monuments. *Geikie.*

**8. Magicians.** There is a wide region, a borderland between the two worlds of spirit and of matter, in which are found a great many mysterious phenomena which cannot be explained by any known laws of nature, and through which men fancy they get nearer to the spiritual world. There are many singular appearances, coincidences, forebodings, premonitions, toward which men have always been attracted. When men have no word from God to depend upon, no knowledge at all of where either the race or individuals are going to, they will eagerly grasp at anything that even seems to shed a ray of light on their future. We make light of that whole category of phenomena, because we have a more sure word of prophecy by which, as with a light in a dark place, we can tell where our next step should be, and what the end shall be. But invariably in heathen countries, where no guiding spirit of God was believed in, there existed a class of persons who undertook to satisfy the craving of men to see into the future. *Dods.*

**14.** The fact of Joseph having shaved himself is in striking accord with the Egyptian custom, which was to let the beard and hair grow in mourning only—otherwise most scrupulously shaving : whereas the Hebrews cultivated the hair and beard and shaved in token of mourning. He changed his raiment, from the ordinary habit of the prison to that of ordinary life or even of festal rejoicing. The fact of his having it in his power to do so shows that he was not treated as an ordinary prisoner. *Alf.*—— The extreme personal cleanliness of the ancient Egyptians is indicated, not only in this shaving of Joseph, but in his change of raiment. The attention which the priests, in particular, paid to this matter, is mentioned by divers ancient authors. But it was not confined to their order. " Every Egyptian prided himself," says Wilkinson, " on the encouragement of habits which it was considered a disgrace to neglect." *Kit.*

**16. God shall give Pharaoh an answer.** When Joseph professes to declare from God himself what he was about to do, and when everything happened according to his predictions, it was undeniably evident that the God whom Joseph worshipped was the Ruler of the universe, and that Joseph received from him that wisdom in which he so far excelled all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Thus the true God left not himself without a witness in the most famous kingdom of the world, at a time when the grossest darkness enveloped most of the Gentile nations. *Bush.*

**26, 27.** The fertility of a year depended upon the due proportion of the Nile-inundation. Too much or too little of it would necessarily bring dearth and famine. Hence both the fat

and the lean kine which were seen to ascend from the Nile were symbols either of years of fruitfulness or of dearth. K.——The explanation of the inundation is as follows : The White Nile, fed by the immense equatorial lakes, which are themselves supported by a rainfall lasting for more than nine months out of the twelve, and which constitute great natural reservoirs, sends down a constant, vast, and only slightly varying stream of water to the sea. Unlike it, however, the Blue and the Black tributaries are largely intermittent, and in the dry season would fail, without the White River, to reach the Mediterranean at all. On the other hand, without these two affluents the Nile would have no flood, and, even if it had, would leave little or no alluvial deposit. But the heavy summer rains in Abyssinia, which fall between May and September, wash down the rich lands of that country by the Blue Nile and the Atbara, and these, added to the ordinary current of the White Nile, increase its volume so as to cause the periodical overflow, and at the same time to charge its waters with red argillaceous mud to such an extent that when spread over a wide surface, and allowed sufficient slackness of current for the purpose, they precipitate over the land that rich alluvial dressing which enables it to produce a constant series of the most abundant harvests. Thus, roughly speaking, the White Nile supplies the unfailing volume of water, and the Abyssinian tributaries give the annual inundation. The river begins to rise at Cairo about the end of June, and goes on increasing until the end of September, then, after remaining at the same level for a few days, it commences to fall, and continues to do so until about the middle of the following May. If the rise be less than twenty-four feet there will be a scanty harvest, and if less than twenty there will be a famine ; but if it exceed thirty, the villages will be flooded, and great damage will be the result. W. M. T.

**30–36.** When there was famine in Canaan in the days of Abraham, there was plenty in Egypt ; and so established was its character in this respect, that it was frequently called the *granary of the world.* Yet Joseph here foretells that there should not only be a grievous famine in Egypt, but a famine so terrible that all the luxuriant plenty of the former fruitful years should be forgotten as if it never were ; and it was to continue, not for one or two, but for seven years ! The good counsel which Joseph adds to the interpretation of the dream makes the answer of God an answer of peace and not of evil. The purpose of God in Pharaoh's dreams was to procure deliverance and honor to Joseph, and to preserve Egypt, and the family of Jacob, and the countries around from destruction. Joseph's advice tended to secure this result. *Bush.*

**37–39.** Pharaoh and his court are at once struck with the appositeness of the interpretation, and unhesitatingly adopt it as the true one. The Spirit of God was shown to be in him, both by the interpretation, and by the wisdom of words with which he had followed it up. *Alf.*——This is paralleled by an expression in the similar history of Daniel (ch. 5 : 11, 14). It is not necessary for us to know what idea Pharaoh attached to his own words in this expression. It was plain to him that Joseph could not have discovered the import of the dreams by his own sagacity. He was sensible that a divine person or a divine influence had enlightened his mind and given him this extraordinary knowledge. His proposal therefore to honor Joseph was a virtual honoring of the God whom he served. *Bush.*——It would seem that the Pharaoh of the time was a monotheist. Not only does he make no protest against the pronounced monotheism of Joseph (vs. 16, 25, 32), but he uses himself the most decidedly monotheistic language when he says to his nobles, "Can we find such a one as this is—*a man in whom the Spirit of God is?*" and again when he addresses Joseph as follows : "*Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this*, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art." No such distinct recognition of the unity of God is ascribed either to the Pharaoh of the Old Empire who received Abraham, or to those of the New Empire who came into contact with Moses. G. R.

**41.** We now know the exact period of Egyptian history at which the Exodus must have taken place ; and if we count 430 years, "the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt" (Exod. 12 : 40), back from this, we shall be brought to the reign of the Hyksos king Apophis or Apepi, the very king, in fact, under whom, according to ancient authors, Joseph was raised to be the *adon*, or second ruler of the state. It was not until the Hyksos were driven out of the country, and Aahmes, the founder of the eighteenth dynasty, was pursuing with bitter hatred both them and their friends, that "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." *Sayce.*

**41–45.** Every trait in the description is purely Egyptian. Pharaoh gives him his signet, which "was of so much importance with the ancient Egyptian kings, that their names were always enclosed in an oval which repre-

sented an elongated signet." He arrays him "in vestures of *byssus*," the noble and also the priestly dress; he puts the cham, or "the collar of gold" "about his neck," which was always the mode of investiture of high Egyptian officials; he makes him ride "in the second chariot which he had," and he has it proclaimed before him: "*Avrech*," that is, "fall down," "bend the knee," or "do obeisance." To complete all, on his naturalization Joseph's name is changed to *Zaphnath-paaneah*, which most probably means "the supporter of life," or else "the food of the living," although others have rendered it "the saviour of the world," and the Rabbis, but without sufficient reason, "the revealer of secrets." Finally, in order to give him a position among the highest nobles of the land, Pharaoh "gave him to wife *Aseneth*," daughter of Potiphera, priest or prince of On (Heliopolis). A. E.

*On*, the "Aven" of Ezek. 30 : 17, the "Bethshemesh" of Jer. 43 : 13, and "Heliopolis" of the Septuagint, was a place of great celebrity, and the principal seat of learning in Egypt before the accession of the Ptolemies, when the schools were transferred to Alexandria; the ruins are not far from Cairo, and are marked by an obelisk sixty-eight feet high, which is considered one of the oldest monuments of its kind in Egypt. Mounds and crude brick walls are all that remain of Bethshemesh; for its "images" have been broken, and "the houses of the gods of the Egyptians" have been burned with fire (Jer. 43 : 13). At On Moses is said to have studied, and to have become "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." *Wilson.*

The people of Egypt were divided into castes, like those of India, as they exist to the present day, and as they formerly prevailed among many other oriental nations. At the head of these castes stood that of the priesthood. From this order the king was usually selected; if one of the warriors, the next class in rank, should attain to that eminence, he was always installed and enrolled in the superior order. The priestly caste, in rank and power, stood far above the rest of the people. In each nome or district (if indeed these divisions were of so early a date) stood a temple and a sacerdotal college. In them one third of the whole land of the country was inalienably vested. The priests were not merely the ministers of religion, they were the hereditary conservators of knowledge. They were the public astronomers, by whom all the agricultural labors of the people were regulated; the public geometricians, whose service was indispensable, since the Nile annually obliterated the landmarks of the country; in their hieroglyphical characters the public events were recorded; they were the physicians; in short, to them belonged the whole patrimony of science, which was inseparably bound up with their religion. The political powers of this hereditary aristocracy were unbounded; they engrossed apparently both the legislative and judicial functions; they were the framers, the conservators, the interpreters of the laws. As interpreter of dreams, Joseph, no doubt, intruded into the province of this all powerful caste, and the king, not improbably with a view to disarm their jealousy, married his new vizier to the daughter of the Priest of the Sun, who dwelled in On, called afterward by the Greeks Heliopolis (the City of the Sun). Moreover, in the great political measure of Joseph, the resumption of all the lands into the hands of the crown, the sacred property of the priests was exempted from the operation of the law, and the whole class supported, during the famine, at the royal charge. The next caste in dignity was that of the warriors, called by Herodotus, Hermotybïes or Kalasyries. The lower classes of the people constituted the rest of the orders; according to Herodotus five, to Diodorus three more. The latter reckons husbandmen, artisans, and shepherds; Herodotus, shepherds, swineherds, manufacturers and shopkeepers, interpreters, and mariners, that is, the boatmen of the Nile. The boundaries of these castes were unalterably fixed, the son held forever the same rank, and pursued the same occupation with his father. *Milman.*

The ministers of the court were in Egypt the priests, just as the state was a Theocracy, and the king was considered as the representative and incarnation of the Godhead. *Heeys.*—— The reader will perhaps recall the striking analogy between the Egyptian system and the Hebrew Theocracy, particularly in the point that the ministers of religion were also ministers of civil law and prominent in its administration. The judges in the civil courts were taken chiefly from the tribe of Levi. H. C.

**46, 47.** Joseph knew that his advancement was intended for the public good; to enable him to do some general service; and to preserve life. This is the design of Providence, whenever a person is advanced to any station of figure and fortune. And men should consider that the more they enjoy, they are accountable for so much more; and as they are capable of doing the more good, by neglecting these opportunities they expose themselves to the greater punishments. *Bp. Conybeare.*——He who en-

abled Joseph to repel temptation and to endure affliction, enabled him also to bear the glory that was conferred upon him with humility. He was, and he felt himself to be, exalted to power for the good and the safety of the peo ple, and he entered at once upon the active discharge of the duties of his station. He went through all the land of Egypt, not to show his greatness, but to see with his own eyes what was to be done, to issue the proper orders, and to see their execution *Bush.*

Those who take God's discipline kindly here and turn it to best account according to his thought and will, have their reward above. It is not needful that we know in their details what the heavenly responsibilities are, and what the dignities and the honors of those who have been faithful over a few things here ; but we are safe in the belief that earthly discipline and culture are not lost attainments as to the after life. As one short day transferred Joseph from the prison-house of the kingdom to the lordship of that kingdom, so one day is long enough for the transfer of many a humble, suffering saint of God from dungeons of darkness and pain to palaces of royalty and bliss. In the story of Joseph these great truths of God's administration with his people were breaking forth upon the minds of men by most interesting stages of progress. H. C.

**47-49.** During the seven plenteous years Joseph seems to have travelled as commissioner from city to city, establishing royal granaries in each, and storing therein the one fifth of the produce which he claimed in the king's name, and in the public interest. So superabundant were the harvests that the impost does not seem to have been felt. Though only a fifth part of the whole, the quantity was "as the sand of the sea." We know from the sculptures how carefully the Egyptian scribes registered each spring the produce of the fields. But during these years they "left numbering, for it was without number." *J. P. Norris.*——The Pentateuch describes the labors of Joseph in building storehouses, and storing up corn against the famine. The paintings on the monuments give a vivid representation of the whole scene, showing how very common the storehouse was in Egypt. It appears from the paintings, that they kept an account of the amount of grain stored in the magazines, for at the side of the windows of one of them there are characters indicating the quantity deposited therein. This throws light on the statement, that Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, "until he left numbering." E. C. W.——The corn was stored up in each of the cities from the lands of which it was collected ; and it was thus secured for orderly distribution in the years of famine. When that season arrived, its consumption was guarded by the same wise policy that had preserved it from being wasted in the years of plenty. The demand was not only from Egypt, but from the neighboring countries, Canaan, and probably parts of Syria, Arabia, and Africa, to which the famine extended, and whose corn was soon exhausted P. S.

**50-52.** Two things here stand out in the history of Joseph. The same gracious Hand of the Lord, which, during his humiliation, had kept him from sin, disbelief, and despair, now preserved him in his exaltation from pride, and from lapsing into heathenism, to which his close connection with the chief priest of Egypt might easily have led him. More than that, he considered himself "a stranger and a pilgrim" in Egypt. His heart was in his father's home, with his father's God, and on his father's promises. Of both these facts there is abundant evidence. His Egyptian wife bore him two sons "before the years of famine came." He gave to both of them *Hebrew*, not Egyptian names. By the first, *Manasseh*, or "he that maketh forget," he wished to own the goodness of God, who had made him forget his past sorrow and toil. By the second, *Ephraim*, or "double fruitfulness," he distinctly recognized that, although Egypt was the land in which God had caused him "to be fruitful," it was still, and must ever be, not the land of his joy but that of his "affliction"! If it be asked why, in his prosperity, Joseph had not informed his father of his life and success, we answer, that in such a history safety lay in quiet waiting upon God. If Joseph had learned the great lesson of his life, it was this, that all in the past had been of God. Nor would he now interfere with further guidance on his part. The Lord would show the way, and lead to the end. But as for him, he believed, and therefore made no haste. Thus would God be glorified, and thus also would Joseph be kept in perfect peace, because he trusted in him. A. E.

But why does no message go from Joseph to his mourning father? For many reasons. He does not know the state of things at home. He may not wish to open up the dark and bloody treachery of his brothers to his aged parent. He bears in mind those early dreams of his childhood. All his subsequent experience has confirmed him in the belief that they will one day be fulfilled. He will leave it entirely to the all-wise providence of his God to bring about that

strange issue. Joseph, therefore, is true to his life-long character. He leaves all in the hand of God, and awaits in silent hope the days when he will see his father and his brethren. M.—— Joseph was kept tender and humble and domestic and patriotic because he had the faith to know and live with his father's God. This conscious relation to God controlled his whole heart. Having become almost an Egyptian, yet he kept himself as a sacred thing, and behaved himself as a child of the Highest, through the most seducing temptations. *Mercer.*

**For God hath made me to forget all my toil.** It is a beautiful circumstance in the history of Joseph, that he has God ever before his eyes. When tempted to sin, his cry is, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" When the court officers in prison were troubled by their dreams, he said, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" When the king tells him that he had heard of his skill in the interpretation of dreams, he is anxious to turn the credit from himself to God —"It is not in *me:* God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." When the purport of the royal dreams becomes clear to him, he again sees God in them—"God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do." "The thing is established by God; and God will shortly bring it to pass." So, when he discloses himself to his brethren, he says, "God sent me before you, to save your lives by a great deliverance. So it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Again, in the message sent to his father, "God hath made me lord of all Egypt." Also, in the address to his brethren after the death of his father, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good." At last, he dies in the conviction that "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land;" and so assured is he of this, that he takes an oath of them that they will carry his bones with them to the land of their future possession. It was this constant reference to God in all things, before all things, and for all things, that forms the real characteristic of Joseph's history, and is the true secret to all his glory and success. *Kit.*

**54–57.** Famines in Egypt are caused by the failure of those periodic rains of the Abyssinian highlands which swell the waters of the Blue Nile, and cause the Lower Nile to overflow and fertilize the plains of the Egyptian Delta. The rise of the water commences at midsummer, and continues for three or four months. When the water subsides they sow their corn, and reap the crop in the following spring. So it is in our day, as it was in Joseph's. And so rarely did a drought in the Levant extend to Abyssinia, that the Levantine peoples made sure of finding corn in Egypt when their own harvests failed. This explains the concourse of foreign traders of whom we here read: "All countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands." During the first year of the famine, the native Egyptians had the abundant stores of their previous harvest: "in all the land of Egypt there was bread." But they seem to have made no private provision for more than one year in advance as usual—either disbelieving Joseph's prediction, or tempted to part with their surplus by the high prices which it commanded. So "when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread." J. P. N.

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Well may the Hebrew race be proud of these men like Joseph and Daniel, who stood in the presence of foreign monarchs in a spirit of perfect fidelity to God, commanding the respect of all, and clothed with the dignity and simplicity which that fidelity imparted. It matters not to Joseph that there may perhaps be none in that land who can appreciate his fidelity to God or understand his motive. There is something particularly noble and worthy of admiration in a man thus standing alone and maintaining the fullest allegiance to God, without ostentation, and with a quiet dignity and naturalness that shows he has a great fund of strength behind. Influence in the long run belongs to those who rid their minds of all private aims, and get close to the great centre in which all the race meets and is cared for. Men feel themselves safe with the unselfish, with persons in whom they meet principle, justice, truth, love, God. We are unattractive, useless, uninfluential, just because we are still childishly craving a private and selfish good. We know that a life which does not pour itself freely into the common stream of public good is lost in dry and sterile sands. We know that a life spent upon self is contemptible, barren, empty, yet how slowly do we come to the attitude of Joseph, who watched for the fulfilment of God's purposes and found his happiness in forwarding what God designed for the people. *Dods.*

What a life-like romance is the story of Joseph! In what other narrative have the good and evil of the human soul been ever blended in such truthful consistency of thought and emotion? been ever painted in such perfect harmony with the universal human conscious-

ness? Take away the dreams, and what has more the air of veritable history, more of that minute detail and circumstantial coloring which the geography and chronology of Egypt could alone impart to it, than the story of the plenty and the famine! T. L.

## Section 69.

### JACOB'S SONS GO TO EGYPT (FIRST JOURNEY).

GENESIS 42 : 1-38.

1 Now Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, and Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look
2 one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt : get you
3 down thither, and buy for us from thence ; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten
4 brethren went down to buy corn from Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent
5 not with his brethren ; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him. And the sons of
6 Israel came to buy among those that came : for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And
Joseph was the governor over the land ; he it was that sold to all the people of the land : and
Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves to him with their faces to the earth.
7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and
spake roughly with them ; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From
8 the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.
9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are
10 spies ; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said unto him, Nay, my
11 lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons ; we are true men,
12 thy servants are no spies. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land
13 ye are come. And they said, We thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in
the land of Canaan ; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.
14 And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies : hereby ye
15 shall be proved : by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest
16 brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be
bound, that your words may be proved, whether there be truth in you : or else by the life of
17 Pharaoh surely ye are spies. And he put them all together into ward three days. And
18 Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live ; for I fear God : if ye be true men,
19 let one of your brethren be bound in your prison house ; but go ye, carry corn for the famine
20 of your houses : and bring your youngest brother unto me ; so shall your words be verified,
21 and ye shall not die And they did so. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty
concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we
22 would not hear ; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, say-
ing, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child ; and ye would not hear?
23 therefore also, behold, his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood
24 them ; for there was an interpreter between them. And he turned himself about from them,
and wept ; and he returned to them, and spake to them, and took Simeon from among them,
25 and bound him before their eyes. Then Joseph commanded to fill their vessels with corn,
and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way : and
26 thus was it done unto them. And they laded their asses with their corn, and departed
27 thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the lodging place,
28 he espied his money ; and, behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. And he said unto his
brethren, My money is restored ; and, lo, it is even in my sack : and their heart failed them,
and they turned trembling one to another, saying, What is this that God hath done unto us?
29 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that had
30 befallen them ; saying, The man, the lord of the land, spake roughly with us, and took us for
31 spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men ; we are no spies : we be
32 twelve brethren, sons of our father ; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father

33 in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the land, said unto us, Hereby shall I know
that ye are true men ; leave one of your brethren with me, and take *corn for* the famine of
34 your houses, and go your way : and bring your youngest brother unto me . then shall I know
that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men : so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall
35 traffick in the land. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every
man's bundle of money was in his sack : and when they and their father saw their bundles of
36 money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my
children : Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away : all these things
37 are against me. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him
38 not to thee : deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, My
son shall not go down with you ; for his brother is dead, and he only is left : if mischief be-
fall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow
to the grave.

The use which God made of the sin of Joseph's brethren exemplifies his consummate, far-reaching *wisdom*. He knew all the future. He saw the coming famine ; knew how to advance Joseph to the lordship of all Egypt, and to put him there just in time to garner up the surplus of seven years of overflowing abundance, and then dispense these stores of corn for the sustenance of thousands less provident throughout Egypt and all adjacent countries. The resources of God's providence, guided by such wisdom, are simply boundless. The case is equally demonstrative of his *love*. Mark how he bends the great powers of his infinite being to the production of good, to multiply the means of happiness. This view of his character is infinitely precious when studied in its developments in a world, or rather a universe, *with sin in it*. If the Lord were obliged to say —I must content myself with the co-operation of the good ; as to the wicked, the evil they do must be endured as so much dead loss to the universe, never to be of any service toward virtue and happiness—the case would be, so far, one of unrelieved sadness. We may bless the name of our God that his resources of wisdom and power and the outgoings of his love are not thus limited. Good results will be extorted from even those horrible crimes of Joseph's brethren. This story of God's overruling hand in their case was shedding some rays of light on previously dark problems, and therefore was indicating progress in the revelations of God and of his ways with sinful men. H. C.

It was the will of God that Jacob should go down with his whole family to the land of Egypt, where his seed were to be oppressed till the time of their glorious deliverance ; and considering the patriarch's great age and his hereditary attachment to the land of promise, we can see that under the influence of *ordinary* motives he would not have been induced to leave it. But it did not come within the plan of the divine proceedings to exercise any force upon Jacob's will. Whatever he did, he was to do it freely and rationally. Precisely such a train of events as that here related was adapted, as every one can see, with infinite wisdom to bring about the designed result. *Bush.*——Through our own free agency, we are all the time unconsciously working out his purposes ; for, as Isaac Taylor remarks, "This is the very miracle of Providence, that no miracles are needed for the carrying out of its designs." Every actor in this life-drama is seen working according to his own character, and acting according to his own unfettered will. No violence is done to the free agency of any one of them, and yet, in some inscrutable way, they all carry forward one great purpose, and the word of God is fulfilled. Thus God was in and over this history from first to last. But he is as really in each of our lives, and we shall miss the great moral of the story if we do not come to a clear recognition of that fact. W. M. T.

**1, 2.** The notices we get of Jacob in the latter part of his history are very characteristic. He was one of those old men who maintain their vigor to the end, the energy of whose age seems to shame and overtax the prime of common men ; whose minds are still the clearest, their advice the safest, their word waited for, their perception of the actual state of affairs always in advance of their juniors, more modern and fully abreast of the times in their ideas than the latest born of their children. Such an old age we recognize in Jacob's half-scornful chiding of the helplessness of his sons even after they had heard that there was corn in Egypt. "Why look ye one upon another? Behold! I have heard that there is corn in Egypt ; get ye down thither and buy for us from thence." Jacob, the man who had wrestled through life and bent all things to his will, cannot put up with the helpless dejection of this troop of strong men, who have no wit to devise an escape for them-

selves, and no resolution to enforce upon the others any device that may occur to them. It is the old Jacob, full of resources, equal to every turn of fortune, and never knowing how to yield. *Dods.*

**3, 4. And Joseph's ten brethren went.** They are called "Joseph's brethren" and not Jacob's sons, because Joseph is at present the principal character in the story. But Benjamin is called Joseph's brother in a stricter sense. One mother brought them both into the world, and Jacob's fond attachment to Benjamin was in part the effect of his grief for the loss of Joseph. *Bush.*

**5–7.** And now Joseph's brethren go to buy of him whom they had sold; and bow their knees to him for relief, who had bowed to them before for his own life. His age, his habit, the place, the language, kept Joseph from their knowledge; neither had they called off their minds from their folds, to inquire of matters of foreign state, or to hear that a Hebrew was advanced to the highest honor of Egypt. But he cannot but know them, whom he left at their full growth, whose tongue, and habit, and number were all one; whose faces had left so deep an impression in his mind, at their unkind parting: it is wisdom sometimes to conceal our knowledge, that we may not prejudice truth. *Bp. H.*

Joseph was seventeen years old at his departure from Canaan, and had now reached the age of at least thirty-seven. His dress of Egyptian fashion, and which betokened his distinguished rank,—his conversing with them by an interpreter,—his high position and dignity in Egypt, of which, in spite of his dreams, none of his brethren seem ever to have had the least idea,—all serve to account for their not recognizing him; whereas they, arriving from Canaan, speaking their mother tongue, and having all reached to man's estate before his departure, were easily recognized by Joseph. C. G. B. ——**6. Bowed down themselves.** Joseph's dreams were not literally fulfilled, his father being absent; but in spirit they were. *Alf.*——**Spake roughly.** It is evident from the whole narrative, that there was no harshness or revenge on the part of Joseph; but knowing as he did from personal experience what sort of persons his brethren were, and the just grounds their former conduct afforded for fearing what they might do to Benjamin and their old father, his intention was to put them effectually to the proof, to bring them to repentance and the confession of their offence, and, as the instrument of Divine Providence, to work out the good of his family, by making them feel in a very sensible way the wrong they had committed. C. G. B.

**9. Ye are spies.** It might well be suspected that they were spies, especially if the time usually assumed for their visit, that of the dynasty of the shepherd kings, be correct. For this dynasty, we are told by Manetho, was ever in fear of invasion from the then powerful Assyrians; and Josephus says that on that account they fortified the Eastern side of Egypt. Hence men arriving from Asia, and especially Jacob's sons, who from their Chaldaic origin were more like the Eastern Semitic peoples than Canaanites, might well arouse suspicion as to their being Assyrian spies. The nakedness of the land may well refer to its being easily accessible, having fewer strong places than other countries *Alf.*

**11. We are all one man's sons.** We do not belong to *different tribes*, and it is not likely that *one family* would make a hostile attempt upon a kingdom. It is on the *proof* of this that Joseph puts them (ver. 15) in obliging them to leave one as a hostage, and insisting on their bringing their remaining brother; so that he took exactly the precautious to detect them, as if he had had no acquaintance with them and had every reason to be suspicious. A. C. ——No man would send all his sons on so dangerous an enterprise. Nor was it probable that one man could have a design on Egypt but all the great men of Canaan must have joined in it; and then they would have sent men of different families. *Patrick.*

**13.** "One is not," so they spoke of Joseph. It is simpler to take it not as the repetition of their old lie, but as the natural expression of what had come to be their belief. For twenty years they had heard nothing of him, and concluded that he was dead. Reuben, further on, speaking in all soberness, implies that they really thought him dead: "Therefore, behold, also his *blood* is required." J. P. N.——Joseph has the satisfaction of learning that his father is yet alive, and that Benjamin is his favorite, as he himself had been. Moreover, that his brethren treated their father with the respect which he so well deserved, might be inferred from the manner in which they spoke of him, and from their leaving Benjamin to comfort him in their absence. *Bush.*

**15. By the life of Pharaoh.** As if he had said, as surely as the king of Egypt lives, so surely shall ye not go hence unless your brother come hither—here therefore is no *oath*; it is just what they themselves make it in their re-

port to their father (chap. 43 : 3), *the man did solemnly protest unto us.* A. C. ——Through all the details of his conduct here, in the work of securing the preservation of his family, Joseph has a part to play and must play it out consistently. If it is lawful for him to enact the part of an Egyptian prince at all, it is frivolous to raise questions about the details of his conduct —such as his affectation of rudeness toward them as suspected spies, his asseverating "by the life of Pharaoh" in the current formula, and his putting on the air of an Egyptian sage familiar with magic. Admitting that he has the right for a time to keep up the disguise in personating Pharaoh's viceroy, as seen from an Egyptian standpoint, then this admission carries with it all the details. S. R.

**17. Put them.** Hebrew, *collected* or *gathered* them. It seems they did not consent to the terms proposed. None of them would consent to go and bring down Benjamin if all the rest, as Joseph proposed, were to be kept imprisoned till their return. He therefore, with great apparent severity, puts them all into custody for three days. All this was with a view to the end which he wished to have accomplished. *Bush.*——The severity of God only endures till the sinner is brought to recognize his guilt ; it is indeed, like Joseph's harshness with his brethren, nothing more than love in disguise ; and having done its work, having brought him to the acknowledgment of his guilt and misery, reappears as grace again, granting him more than even he had dared to ask or hope, loosing the bands of his sins, and letting him go free. *Trench.*

All these arrangements and tests on the part of Joseph tended toward the humiliation and the penitence of his brethren. He might instantly have said, "I am Joseph !" They could not have borne it. At once he might have said, "Brethren, I forgive you all." He might thus have done more harm than good. The men required to be tested. They had no right to any consideration before they were put to scrutiny and criticism. God has a long process with some of us. He has to take away the firstborn child, and the lastborn, and all between. He has to smite us with disease, foil our purposes, break up our schemes, and confound us at every point, until we begin to say, What does all this *mean ?* J. P.

**18. I fear God.** The declaration expresses nothing less than the ruling principle of his life. His unfeigned fear of God protects him in the hour of severest temptation ; it adorns him in the dungeon as well as in the seat of the governor in Egypt ; it becomes the source of that true wisdom which extends its blessing to thousands ; it enables him to show that rare magnanimity and spirit of forgiveness, the glorious picture of which, after so many ages, we never behold without admiration ; it heightens the enjoyment, lightens the pressure, brightens the evening of his life, and causes him at last, in the firm belief of God's promises, to fall asleep in peace. "God was with him ;" this conclusive sentence was spoken only of Joseph, but not of his brethren (Acts 7 : 9). *Van O.*

**19. Carry grain for your houses.** The governor is touched with feeling for their famishing households. The brothers had now their separate establishments. Twelve households had to be supplied with bread. The journey to Egypt was not to be undertaken more than once a year if possible, as the distance from Hebron was upward of two hundred miles. Hence the ten brothers had with them all their available beasts of burden, with the needful retinue of servants. We need not be surprised that these are not specially mentioned. M ——**If ye be true men.** In the first instance he proposed that one of their number should be sent for Benjamin, and all the rest confined till his return. Here he proposes that one should be confined, and all the rest dispatched to their father's house. This would naturally give them a little further reviving in their bondage. *And they did so.* That is, agreed to do so. *Bush.*

**21. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty.** While Joseph, the better to conceal himself, speaks and acts like a real Egyptian, God employs his affected sternness and severity to awaken their slumbering consciences. Though they were chargeable with many other sins, particularly Simeon and Levi, yet the treatment to which they were subjected brought to remembrance in a special manner their sin against their brother. This was an atrocious iniquity of which they were the most of them equally guilty. Conscience with unerring certainty refers their punishment to their crime, and charges it upon them with fearful distinctness. Their full hearts now begin to utter themselves, and as if they read in each other's looks that the same thoughts were in all their minds at the same time, no sooner does one break silence than they all immediately join in ascribing the evil which had befallen them to its true source. *Bush.*

*Conscience* is a remembrancer, to bring to mind things long since said and done, to show

us wherein we have erred though it was long ago, as this reflection here was above twenty years after the sin was committed. As time will not wear out the guilt of sin, so it will not blot out the records of conscience ; when the guilt of this sin of Joseph's brethren was fresh they made light of it, and sat down to eat bread ; but now, long afterward, their consciences reminded them of it. H.——*The human soul itself contains within itself* all the necessary elements of retributive penalty. Here is nothing but *memory, conscience,* and *reason,* yet what an exhibition and illustration of the self-retributive power of sin ! Memory : "We saw the anguish." Conscience : "We are verily guilty." Reason : "Therefore is this distress come upon us." Let a soul go into the future state with a memory to recall, a conscience to accuse, and a reason to justify penalty as deserved, and what more is necessary to hell ! Hence Milton : "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven !" *Pierson.*

It is very manifest that, for creatures so constituted, there may be no need of any direct interference of God to punish the evil-doer. The life of sin becomes its own punishment as soon as the twenty-two years of prosperity and thoughtlessness are over, and death leads to the prison-houses. You need only be let alone throughout the endless existence that follows—left to the scorpion sting of remorse at the recollection of sins past, and to all the inborn agonies of vice. There is no need of supposing that God will take the punishment of sinners directly into his own hands, or commission and send forth an avenging train to torment and lacerate the wicked. Without any such direct and positive infliction, all that the Scriptures sketch for us by those terrible and ghastly images of the unquenched fire and the clank of the everlasting chains, may be fulfilled in leaving each sinner to be his own tormentor. S. R.

**23, 24.** All this, too, was in the hearing of Joseph. Joseph heard them say that he was their brother. They used to call him "dreamer." He heard them say "the child,"—tenderly. Once they mocked him. He heard them speak in subdued, gentle tones. J. P.——He is deeply moved, and his eyes fill with tears as he witnesses their emotion and grief on his account. Fain would he relieve them from their remorse and apprehension—why, then, does he forbear ? Why does he not at this juncture disclose himself ? It has been satisfactorily proved that his brethren counted their sale of him the great crime of their life. But evidence that a man is conscious of his sin, and, while suffering from its consequences, feels deeply its guilt, is not evidence that his character is altered. And because we believe men so much more readily than God, and think that they do not require, for form's sake, such needless pledges of a changed character as God seems to demand, it is worth observing that Joseph, moved as he was even to tears, felt that common prudence forbade him to commit himself to his brethren without further evidence of their disposition. These men had to give evidence not only that they saw and in some sense repented of their sin, but that they had got rid of the evil passion that led to it. *Dods.* —The work is not yet complete ; so he brushed away the tears and "returned to them and took from them Simeon and bound him before their eyes." Why he chose Simeon is not indicated. Perhaps—not to say probably—he was the leading spirit in the cruel scenes thirteen years before. We remember that Simeon and Levi led off in that bloody affray with the men of Shechem. However this may be, he was the eldest after Reuben ; and Reuben, though a coarse, rough nature, was on the side of mercy toward the abused Joseph. Simeon, therefore, is chosen for the hostage, to be kept in close confinement while the rest are dismissed to go home. Simeon will have abundant time to think over the guilty deeds of that dreadful past ! H. C. ——Reuben, who was the eldest, had resolved to save Joseph ; and Judah also was inclined to favor him : had Simeon joined with them, their authority might have prevailed for his deliverance. Simeon was the eldest of those who had proposed to murder him, and was, therefore, a fit proxy for the rest : the man, as the Hebrews say, who put Joseph into the pit and was now very justly served in his kind. *Stackhouse.*

**28. Their heart failed them.** Their guilt made them afraid ; otherwise they would have rejoiced. But all things terrify an evil conscience. *Patrick.*——**What is this that God hath done unto us ?** Overlooking second causes, they attribute directly to the judgments of God what had now befallen them. It seemed to them that he was still pursuing them in a mysterious way, and with a design to require their brother's blood at their hand. *Bush.*

The whole narrative shows that, so far from being void of fraternal feeling and hard-hearted, in fact it tasked his firmness of character to the utmost to suppress his emotions sufficiently to

carry out his purpose. His main purpose was to bring them to thorough repentance. For this end he must needs throw their thought back upon their great sin and bring the heavy pressure of present calamity upon them with all its suggestive power to show them that God was taking them in hand for that wickedness. He also wished to see how they felt toward their father and toward Benjamin. Their feeling toward both the father and his youngest son would be an index of their penitence for their great sin toward himself. Joseph was a man of consummate wisdom. Few men have ever lived who understood human nature better than he, or could plan better for a given effect. Consequently we shall not miss greatly if we infer his design from the actual effect. When we see what he accomplished, we are reasonably safe in saying—This is what he aimed to do. H. C.

**36. All these things are against me.** These things were not against him. They were really working for his after good. They were onward steps in that process by which he was to recover his long-lost son, and was to have conferred upon him those years of happiness which, as we read the story, we are apt to call the Sabbath of his life, with its rest, its thankfulness, and its joy. W. M. T.——Instead of being *against* him, all these things were *for* him ; and by all these means, was the merciful God working for the preservation of himself and his family, and the fulfilment of his ancient promise, that the posterity of Abraham *should be as the stars of heaven for multitude.* A. C.——Notwithstanding all the promises he had received from the God of Bethel, Jacob's heart sunk under the weight of this complicated distress ; and in his infirmity he pronounced against himself and against the faithfulness of God, "All these things are against me." How could any circumstance be against a good man to whom it was secured by covenant that all things should work together for his good ? Poor man, how weak is thy faith ! Is it so much against thee that Joseph is taken from thee to be the lord of Egypt and the nourisher of thine old age ? But how glorious did the providence of God appear to Jacob when he lay infolded in the arms of his Joseph ! What a sufficient explanation was that of the mysterious dealings of his heavenly Father ! We shall not all see such full explanations in this life, but we shall all see them. When the whole skein of providence is unfolded, all will appear as those mysterious events did to Jacob when he met with his long-lost son. Love,—the love of God,—the love of Jesus, will appear to have animated the whole machine of government and to have moved every wheel. And ten thousand voices, which once pronounced, "All these things are against me," will shout and sing, Hosanna to Him who made my tears to flow. Everlasting thanks to a Father's care for the furnace in which I was purified for glory. Alleluia. Blessing and honor and glory to Him who made my tears to flow. *Griffin.*

## Section 70.

### SECOND JOURNEY TO EGYPT—WITH BENJAMIN.

GENESIS 43 : 1-34.

1 AND the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the
2 corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a
3 little food. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us,
4 saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. If thou wilt send our
5 brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food : but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down : for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with
6 you. And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had
7 yet a brother ? And they said, The man asked straitly concerning ourselves, and concerning our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive ? have ye *another* brother ? and we told him according to the tenor of these words : could we in any wise know that he would say, Bring
8 your brother down ? And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go ; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.

9 I will be surety for him ; of my hand shalt thou require him : if I bring him not unto thee,
10 and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever : for except we had lingered,
11 surely we had now returned a second time. And their father Israel said unto them, If it be
so now, do this ; take of the choice fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man
12 a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spicery and myrrh, nuts, and almonds : and take
double money in your hand ; and the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks
13 carry again in your hand ; peradventure it was an oversight : take also your brother, and
14 arise, go again unto the man : and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may
release unto you your other brother and Benjamin. And if I be bereaved of my children, I
am bereaved.

15 And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin ;
16 and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Ben-
jamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, Bring the men into the house, and slay,
17 and make ready ; for the men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade ;
18 and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they
were brought into Joseph's house ; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in
our sacks at the first time are we brought in ; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall
19 upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. And they came near to the steward of
20 Joseph's house, and they spake unto him at the door of the house, and said, Oh my lord, we
21 came indeed down at the first time to buy food : and it came to pass, when we came to the
lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of
22 his sack, our money in full weight : and we have brought it again in our hand. And other
money have we brought down in our hand to buy food : we know not who put our money in
23 our sacks. And he said, Peace be to you, fear not : your God, and the God of your father,
hath given you treasure in your sacks : I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto
24 them. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they
25 washed their feet ; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present
26 against Joseph came at noon : for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when
Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house,
27 and bowed down themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, and
28 said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? And they said,
Thy servant our father is well, he is yet alive. And they bowed the head, and made obei-
29 sance. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said,
Is this your youngest brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious
30 unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste ; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother :
31 and he sought where to weep ; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he
32 washed his face, and came out ; and he refrained himself, and said, Set on bread. And they
set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat
with him, by themselves : because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews ; for
33 that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according
to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth : and the men marvelled one with
34 another. And he took *and sent* messes unto them from before him : but Benjamin's mess was
five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

The careful student of Stephen's speech can hardly fail to see that he had One greater than Joseph in his mind, when he reminded his hearers how their fathers, "moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt ; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt, and all his house." Even so had they, too, moved with envy, delivered Jesus into the hands of Gentiles ; even so had God been with Him, and highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that was above every name ; and even so, though His own nation might reject Him, yet in Him should the Gentiles trust.

J. P. N.——When the chosen family were in the process of assuming the rudimentary form of that people through whom salvation and blessing were to come to other kindreds of the earth, the beginning was rendered prophetic of the end ; the operations both of the evil and the good in the infancy of the nation were made to image the prospective manifestation that was to be given of them when the things of the divine kingdom should rise to their destined maturity. Especially in the history of Joseph, the repre-

sentative of the covenant in its earlier stage, was there given a wonderful similitude of Him in whom its powers and blessings were to be concentrated in their entire fulness, and who was therefore in all things to obtain the pre-eminence among His brethren. Like Joseph, the Son of Mary, though born among brethren after the flesh, was treated as an alien ; envied and persecuted even from His infancy, and obliged to find a temporary refuge in the very land that shielded Joseph from the fury of his kindred. His supernatural and unblemished righteousness continually provoked the malice of the world, and at the same time received the most unequivocal tokens of the divine favor and blessing. It was that righteousness, exhibited amid the greatest trials and indignities, in the deepest debasement, and in worse than prison-house affliction, which procured His elevation to the right hand of power and glory, from which He was thenceforth to dispense the means of salvation to the world. In the dispensation, too, of these blessings, it was the hardened and cruel enmity of His immediate kindred which opened the door of grace and blessing to the heathen ; and the sold, hated, and crucified One becomes a Prince and Saviour to the nations of the earth, while His famishing brethren reap in bitterness of soul the fruit of their inexcusable hatred and malice. Nor is there a door of escape to be found for them until they come to acknowledge, in contrition of heart, that they are verily guilty concerning their brother. Then, however, looking unto Him whom they have pierced, and owning Him as, by God's appointment, the one channel of life and blessing, their hatred shall be repaid with love, and they shall be admitted to share in the inexhaustible fulness that is treasured up in Christ. P. F.

**1–10.** The pressure of famine is again upon the encampment in Hebron ; and Jacob says to his sons, " Go again, buy us a little food." This is what his sons have waited for. Judah comes now to the front, and manifests the highest wisdom and the greatest consideration for all parties concerned. He reminded his father that it would be only making matters worse for them if they should return to Egypt without Benjamin, since that would be interpreted by the Egyptian lord as an evidence that they had spoken untruly on their former visit, and would probably end in the imprisonment of them all along with Simeon ; so that, as the result, he would have neither food nor sons, save Benjamin only. And when his father asked why they had told the great man that they had another brother, he defended their conduct by describing how the information had been forced out of them by the accusation that they were spies, and by the repeated interrogations of their questioner, consequent upon their statement that they were all sons of one man. There was no resisting the force of his words when he asked, " Could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down ?" But the power of his appeal was strengthened when with a noble spirit of self-sacrifice he offered himself as surety for the safety of Benjamin. W M. T.

**8. The lad.** The peculiar usage of the Hebrew in regard to " lad " is here to be borne in mind. Benjamin was now at least thirty years of age ; and had children of his own yet he is here called " a lad," because he was the youngest of all the sons of Jacob, and, in the lack of Joseph, the favorite of his aged father. *Bush.*

**14. God Almighty.** *El Shaddai* Jacob here uses that name of the Most High, by which He made Himself known to Abraham, and afterward renewed His covenant with Jacob himself. Hereby he calls to mind the promise of protection to himself and his house, as well as the power of Him who had promised. E. H. B. ——*God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin.* Yet, if God had otherwise appointed,—if He saw fit to take from him his children, his faith would rise to this also : " And I, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved !"—good is the will of the Lord, and he would bow before it. It is touching (vs. 11, 12) to watch his feeble attempts to ward off the wrath of the dreaded Egyptian. It was a famine-year, and there would be scarcity of the luxuries which were usually exported from the East to Egypt. Let them, then, take a present of such dainties to the Egyptian—" a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds." As for the money which had been put back into their sacks, it might have been an oversight. Let them take it again with them, along with the price of what corn they were now to purchase. And so let them go forth in the name of the God of Israel —Benjamin, and all the rest. He would remain behind alone, as at the fords of Jabbok, —no, not alone ; but in faith and patience awaiting the issue. A E.

**18.** *They were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house.* The just challenges of their own consciences and Joseph's suspicions of them forbade them to expect any favor, and suggested to them that this was done with a bad design upon them. Those that are guilty and timorous are apt to make the worst of

everything. H.——Their accusing consciences represented everything to them through a disheartening medium. Yet according to the prevailing custom of the East, the very fact that they had been invited to Joseph's table was in itself an encouraging circumstance.

**18-26.** They imagined that they were to be called in question about the money which they had found in their sacks on their return from their former visit ; therefore they took the opportunity, as they were approaching the palace, to make the steward acquainted with the true state of the case. But he reassured them by telling them that he had received their money, and by bringing Simeon out to them that they might be all united once again One cannot but marvel at the spirit manifested by this servant. He seems, indeed, to have been taken by his master into his confidence for the occasion, and the words which he uses would indicate either that Joseph had told him precisely what to say, or that he was himself, under the influence and example of Joseph, a believer in Jehovah ; for thus he speaks : "Peace be to you, fear not : your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks : I had your money." Surely now, therefore, they would be set at rest, for was not this an answer to their father's prayer, "God Almighty give you mercy before the man" ? That impression would be deepened when they saw that the steward treated them as his master's guests, and gave them water for their feet and provender for their asses, telling them at the same time that they should eat bread there. So they got their present ready, and when Joseph came they put it into his hands and bowed themselves to the earth, thus once again fulfil ling the dream of his youth. W. M. T.

**26. Present.** There was still more in the incident than a proof of Jacob's wish to conciliate the lord of Egypt. The giving of costly presents was and ever has been in that quarter of the world, *the usual token of homage to superiors.* As this present came from Jacob by the hand of his sons, Joseph's dream might now be considered as verified, that the sun, moon, and eleven stars did obeisance to him. When his brethren bowed down themselves to the earth before him, they humbly solicited his favor for their father as well as for themselves. *Bush.*

**27-30.** Little could they imagine what thoughts passed through his mind, as in true Oriental fashion they laid out the humble presents his father had sent, and lowly "bowed themselves to him to the earth." His language ill concealed his feelings. Again and again he inquired for his father, and as they replied : "Thy servant our father is in good health ; he is yet alive," they again "bowed down their heads, and made obeisance." But when he fastened his eyes on Benjamin, his own mother's son, and had faltered it out, so unlike an Egyptian : "God be gracious unto thee, my son," he was obliged hastily to withdraw, "for his bowels did yearn upon his brother." Twenty-two years had passed since he had been parted from his brother. Would they who had once sacrificed him on account of jealousy, be ready again to abandon his brother for the sake of selfishness ? A. E.

**29. My son.** Benjamin was only seven years younger than Joseph—therefore thirty-two years old. This term is rather the kind expression of a superior, than any allusion to Benjamin's youth. The words contain not so much a particular blessing, but an usual form of friendly salutation in the East. *Gerl.*

**33.** The brothers of Joseph *sat* before him at the table, while according to patriarchal practice they were accustomed to recline. It appears from the sculptures that the Egyptians also were in the habit of sitting at table, although they had couches. Sofas were used for sleeping. In a painting in Rosellini each one of the guests sits upon a stool, which, in accordance with the custom, took the place of the couch. *Hengs.*——*That the brethren of Joseph were seated according to their age* must have increased the mystery which they felt hanging about their relation to him. It must have made the impression on them that the man on whom their life and happiness depended had more than human knowledge ; that he could penetrate into the most intimate relations and circumstances of their family-life. **34.** But the remarkable *distinction* bestowed on *Benjamin* must have appeared to them even more strange and important. In the family of his father Benjamin occupied the position of Joseph, and it was soon to appear whether the want of affection which had characterized their conduct toward Joseph would also characterize that toward Benjamin. For the circumstance that Benjamin received a fivefold portion forms quite a parallel to the peculiar dress by which the affection of his father had distinguished Joseph. At that time only envy, hatred, and vengeance had been the consequences of this distinction ; it was now to appear whether the same would result in the case of Benjamin. K.

The host appears to become satisfied of one thing, that his guests are no longer envious one of another. They do not murmur, though the

representative of Egypt's monarchy confers especial favors upon the youngest. Ambition no longer sways their hearts as once it did. Malice has given place to kindly feelings; hatred, to love. J. S. V.——We may be sure that if they had been envious of Benjamin they would have revealed it by their remarks upon his procedure. But no such manifestation was made by them, and the feast was one of harmonious gladness, "for they drank and were merry with him." W. M. T.

## Section 71.

### THE SILVER CUP. JUDAH'S ELOQUENT PLEA.

GENESIS 44 : 1–34.

1 AND he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as
2 much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup,
the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did accord-
3 ing to the word that Joseph had spoken. As soon as the morning was light, the men were
4 sent away, they and their asses. *And* when they were gone out of the city, and were not yet
far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake
5 them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my
6 lord drinketh, and whereby he indeed divineth? ye have done evil in so doing. And he over-
7 took them, and he spake unto them these words. And they said unto him, Wherefore speak-
8 eth my lord such words as these? God forbid that thy servants should do such a thing. Be-
hold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the
9 land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With
whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.
10 And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall
11 be my bondman; and ye shall be blameless. Then they hasted, and took down every man
12 his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, *and* began at the
13 eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent
14 their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city. And Judah and his
brethren came to Joseph's house; and he was yet there: and they fell before him on the
15 ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? know ye not that
16 such a man as I can indeed divine? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what
shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy
servants: behold, we are my lord's bondmen, both we, and he also in whose hand the cup is
17 found. And he said, God forbid that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is
found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.
18 Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak
a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even
19 as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we
20 said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and
21 his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou
22 saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And
we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his
23 father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come
24 down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass when we came up unto
25 thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, buy
26 us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then
will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.
27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the
28 one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him

29 since: and if ye take this one also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my
30 gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father,
31 and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to
pass, when he seeth that the lad is not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring
32 down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant be-
came surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear
33 the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of
34 the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren For how shall I go
up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come on my father.

**1–5.** Joseph has had the satisfaction of seeing his brother Benjamin safe and well. He has heard his brothers acknowledging their guilt concerning himself. He resolves to put their attachment to Benjamin, and the genuineness of their change of disposition, to a test that will at the same time expose Benjamin to no hazard. M.——It is evidently his purpose to test the disposition of the ten toward his youngest brother and toward his father. At former interviews he had sought to awaken conscience; now he seeks to ascertain the feelings of their hearts. Is their affection for Benjamin above the reach of envy? their love for a father such that partiality shown to Rachel's son will no longer excite malice? Will they cling to a brother in adversity? Will they make sacrifices to secure his return to a doting father? J. S. V.

**5. Whereby he divineth.** Divining by cups, we learn from this, was a common custom in Egypt. It is here mentioned to enhance the value of the cup. M.——The word rendered divineth (*nichesh*) means to hiss like a serpent (*nachash*), and hence to murmur incantations. There is no proof that Joseph himself really practised this divination: the whole intent is to inspire terror into his brethren, and impress them with his supernatural character. *Alf.*

**7–14.** The charge of treachery and of theft so took the brothers by surprise, that, in their conscious innocence, they offered to surrender the life of the guilty and the liberty of all the others, if the cup were found with any of them. But the steward had been otherwise instructed. He was to isolate Benjamin from the rest. With feigned generosity he now refused their proposal, and declared his purpose only to retain the guilty as bondsman. The search was made, and the cup found in the sack of Benjamin. Now the first great trial of their feelings ensued. They were all free to go home to their own wives and children; Benjamin alone was to be a bondsman: the cup had been found in *his* sack! Granting that, despite appearances, they knew him to be innocent, why should they stand by him? They had formerly got rid of one favorite, why hesitate now, when Providence itself seemed to rid them of another? What need, nay, what business had they to identify themselves with him? Was it not enough that he had been put before them everywhere; must they now destroy their whole family, and suffer their little ones to perish for the sake of one who, to say the best, seemed fated to involve them in misery and ruin? So they might have reasoned. But so they did not reason, nor, indeed, did they reason at all; for in all matters of duty reasoning is ever dangerous, and only absolute, immediate obedience to what is right, is safe. "They rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city." In the presence of Joseph, "they fell before him on the ground" in mute grief. A. E.

The brothers, recognizing now their brotherhood, circled round Benjamin, and, to a man, resolved to go back with him to Egypt. Thus Joseph in seeking to gain *one* brother found eleven—for now there could be no doubt that they were very different men from those brethren who had so heartlessly sold into slavery their father's favorite—men now with really brotherly feelings, by penitence and regard for their father so wrought together into one family, that this calamity, intended to fall only on one of their number, did in falling on him fall on them all. So far from wishing now to rid themselves of Rachel's son and their father's favorite, who had been put by their father in so prominent a place in his affection, they will not even give him up to suffer what seemed the just punishment of his theft, do not even reproach him with having brought them all into disgrace and difficulty, but, as humbled men who knew they had greater sins of their own to answer for, went quietly back to Egypt, determined to see their younger brother through his misfortune or to share his bondage with him. Had these men not been thoroughly changed, thoroughly convinced that at all costs upright dealing and brotherly love should continue; had they not possessed that first and last of Christian virtues, love to their brother, then

nothing could so certainly have revealed their want of it as this apparent theft of Benjamin's. *Dods.*

**15. Know ye not that I can divine?** This pretence of practising divination is in keeping with the whole transaction, which was a feint throughout. Joseph was supporting the character of an Egyptian of rank, and as it was known that such a person would daily consult his divining cup for the good or evil auguries of the day, the prompt detection of the alleged theft would be the more readily accounted for. *Kit.*——It is plain that he is merely carrying on to its final development the trial which he was making of the temper of his brethren. He put on a stern aspect, and upbraided them with a pretended crime, but it was to give them occasion to show their innocency and their repentance. *Bush.*

**16.** Judah comes to the front here; it is "Judah and his brethren" who come to Joseph's house, and Judah who makes the plea in behalf of Benjamin. The historian is careful to say again that when they met Joseph "they fell before him on the ground." He also remarks that Joseph was yet in his house, having remained there ever since the caravan left in the early morning, too full of thought on this subject to turn to any other business. Now he expects to learn how they feel toward Benjamin and toward their aged father. He must be sure they are all right on these points before he lifts the vail and shows them himself. They are brought as criminals before him. With a sternness that is not at all in his heart but in his assumed manner only, he says—What deed is this that ye have done? Were ye not aware that I have the power of positive and certain divination? Judah is in deep perplexity, but he speaks frankly. H. C.——In saying "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants," he does not mean to plead guilty to the present charge, nor make a *definite* acknowledgment of any particular offence, but to say in general, that it was in consequence of former misdeeds that God had suffered them to fall into this unhappy predicament, and to express a willingness that he should punish them in this way, if he saw fit. They well knew that they had sold Joseph for a slave, and filled up many of the years of their father's life with bitter anguish, and they admit that it were a righteous thing with God to make them all slaves for crimes which their consciences charged upon them, but of which they supposed Joseph to be profoundly ignorant. *Bush.*

**18–34.** In mute despair all the brothers remain prostrate on the ground; only Judah, equally bold and humble, ventures to come near to the severe ruler of Egypt. His heart, full of love and sorrow, of repentance and grief, finds vent in speech, which, like a pent-up stream, breaks through the dam—artless and simple, but impressive and convincing, eloquent and irresistible, as scarce speech had ever flowed from man's lips. The vividness of his description is inimitable. Rapidly he relates the state of matters; he describes the attachment with which his father cleaves to the youth, the anxious care with which he had dismissed him, and the wretchedness through which, in consequence of his loss, his gray hairs would go down to the grave with sorrow. Then he adds that himself had become surety for the lad, and entreats to allow him to remain as slave in his room. K.

We can imagine nothing more perfect than this address of Judah for the object of overpowering the sensibilities of him to whom it was spoken. In simplicity and touching pathos it excels every composition I ever met; nor can I figure a combination of traits and circumstances more fitted to tell on the heart of Joseph, and to operate as a fit precursor for the emotions which he could no longer repress. The most effective of these references were to his father, an old man; and the child of his old age; and the death of the brother, and the love borne by Jacob to the only surviving child of his mother, now taken from them. Then there was Jacob's conjecture of him who was torn in pieces, and his saying, that if the other should be taken from him, his gray hairs would be brought with sorrow to the grave. The expression of these things is varied in the course of the address, but so as to give additional intensity and power to the representation: such as Jacob's life being bound up in the lad's life; and Judah's entreaty to be detained instead of Benjamin—for he could not look on the evil that was to come upon his father. No wonder that Joseph, unable longer to contain himself, should burst forth into a flood of tenderness at the time he did. Estimated as a mere literary composition, we can see nothing to equal this in any of the greatest masters of eloquence and poetry. *Chalmers.*

Kalisch justly calls this pleading speech of Judah's "one of the masterpieces of Hebrew composition." Its beauty mainly consists in the simple and pathetic statement of facts. Luther says, "I would that I could pray so well to our Lord God, as Judah prays here to Joseph, for it is a perfect example of prayer and of the earnestness which should be in prayer." *Alf.*

When one sees such passages related by men who affect no art, and who lived long *after* the parties who first uttered them, we cannot conceive how all particulars could be so naturally and fully recorded unless they had been suggested by *his* Spirit who gives mouths and speech unto men ; who, being alike present to all successions, is able to communicate the secret thoughts of forefathers to their children, and put the very words, never registered before, into the mouths or pens of their successors for many ages after, and that exactly, and distinctly. For it is plain, that every circumstance is here related with such natural specifications as if Moses heard them talk. *Jackson.*

**33.** Judah, in honor to the justice of Joseph's sentence, and to show his sincerity in this plea, offers himself to become a bondman instead of Benjamin. Thus the law would be satisfied : Joseph would be no loser ; and Jacob would better bear the loss of him than of Benjamin. Now, so far was he from grieving at his father's particular fondness for Benjamin, that he is himself willing to be a bondman, to indulge it. Judah's faithful adherence to Benjamin, now in his distress, was recompensed long after by the constant adherence of the tribe of Benjamin to the tribe of Judah, when all the other ten tribes had deserted it. H.——As Judah spoke, so the rest felt. They could not bring themselves to inflict a new sorrow on their aged father : neither could they bear to leave their young brother in the hands of strangers. There is now discernible a common feeling that binds them together, and a common object for which they willingly sacrifice themselves. They are, therefore, now prepared to pass into that higher school to which God called them in Egypt. *Dods.*

# Section 72.

## JOSEPH DISCLOSES HIMSELF. PHARAOH'S INVITATION TO JACOB.

GENESIS 45 : 1–24.

1 THEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him ; and he cried,
Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made
2 himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud : and the Egyptians heard, and the
3 house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph ; doth my father
yet live? And his brethren could not answer him ; for they were troubled at his presence.
4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And
5 he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now be not grieved, nor
angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither : for God did send me before you to preserve
6 life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land : and there are yet five years, in
7 the which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to pre-
8 serve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance. So now it was
not you that sent me hither, but God : and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of
9 all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and
say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt : come down
10 unto me, tarry not : and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto
me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and
11 all that thou hast : and there will I nourish thee ; for there are yet five years of famine ; lest
12 thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast. And, behold, your
eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.
13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen : and ye
14 shall haste and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck,
15 and wept ; and Benjamin wept upon his neck And he kissed all his brethren, and wept
upon them : and after that his brethren talked with him.

16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come:
17 and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy
18 brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; and take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land
19 of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your
20 father, and come. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.
21 And the sons of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment
22 of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of rai-
23 ment. And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of
24 Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and victual for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

**1.** The pleading of Judah has conquered, not the determination of Joseph, which had no real existence, but his power of repressing his feelings. But he will not have the Egyptians know the details of his brethren's crime and his own secret history. *Alf.*

**Joseph could not refrain himself.** The repentance of his brothers and their attachment to Benjamin have been demonstrated in the most satisfactory manner. This is all that Joseph sought. It is evident throughout the whole narrative, that he never aimed at exercising any supremacy over his brothers. As soon as he has obtained an affecting proof of the right disposition of his brothers, he conceals himself no longer. Judah has painted the scene at home to the life; and Joseph can hold out no longer. M.——Joseph could no longer constrain himself to act a feigned part —all the *brother* and the *son* rose up in him at once; he felt for his *father*—he realized his disappointment and agony, and he felt for his *brethren;* and, that he might give free and full scope to his feelings, he ordered all his attendants to go out, *while he made himself known to his brethren.*

**3–8.** The speech of Joseph to his brethren is inferior only to that of *Judah*, in the preceding chapter. He saw that his brethren were confounded at his presence—that they were struck with his present power—and that they keenly remembered, and deeply deplored, their own guilt. How delicate and finely wrought is the apology he makes for them! the whole heart of the pious and affectionate brother is at once seen in it—*art* is confounded, and swallowed up by *nature*—"Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves—it was not *you* that sent me hither, but *God.*" What he says also concerning his *father*, shows the warmest feelings of a filial heart. Indeed, the whole chapter is a masterpiece of composition; and it is the more impressive, because it is evidently *a simple relation of facts just as they occurred:* for no attempt is made to heighten the effect, by rhetorical coloring, or philosophical reflections; it is all simple, sheer nature from beginning to end. It is a history that has no fellow, crowded with incidents as probable as they are true; where every passion is called into action, and where every one acts up to its own character. A. C.

The proof of their love to their aged father and to Benjamin is unmistakable; Joseph is satisfied. They are penitent for their long past crime against him, and he can therefore at length break the secret and show himself their long-lost brother! How do their ears tingle as they hear him say—"I am Joseph: Doth my father yet live?" The first shock is almost stunning: they cannot answer him, for they are troubled at his presence. More kind words and the kindest possible manner are now in place. "Joseph said to his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you; and they came near." Again he says—"I am Joseph, *your brother*, whom ye sold into Egypt." Then with a turn which evinces the exquisite tenderness of his heart, he begs them "not to be grieved nor angry with themselves;" but to think rather of the design of God in permitting and providentially shaping this wonderful series of events. "God did send me before you to preserve life. There are five more years of famine yet to come; God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." The best thing he could say under just those circumstances to soothe their minds and assure them of his full forgiveness. H. C.

Never any word sounded so strangely as this in the ears of the patriarchs. Wonder, doubt, reverence, joy, fear, hope, guiltiness, struck them at once. It was time for Joseph to say,

"Fear not:" no marvel if they stood with paleness and silence before him; looking on him, and on each other: the more they considered, they wondered more; and the more they believed, the more they feared: for those words, "I am Joseph," seemed to sound thus much to their guilty thoughts; "You are murderers, and I am a prince in spite of you: my power and this place give me all opportunities of revenge; my glory is your shame, my life your danger; your sin lives together with me." But now the tears and gracious words of Joseph assure them of pardon and love. *Bp. H.*

A less delicate mind would have talked of *forgiving* them; but he entreats them to forgive themselves, as though *his* forgiveness was not in question. They were not to consider their crime too great to be forgiven, either by that God or that brother whom they had offended. Indeed his main object seems now to be to bring them to eye the hand of an overruling providence in all that had happened, so as to be reconciled to the event, though they might weep in secret for the part which they had acted. *Bush.*

**5–8.** It might have been an injudicious speech to impenitent men; but no further view of sin can lighten its heinousness to a really penitent sinner. Prove to him that his sin has become the means of untold good, and you only humble him the more, and more deeply convince him that while he was recklessly gratifying himself and sacrificing others for his own pleasure, God has been mindful of others, and, pardoning him, has blessed them. God does not need our sins to work out His good intentions, but we give Him little other material; and the discovery that through our evil purposes and injurious deeds God has worked out His beneficent will, is certainly not calculated to make us think more lightly of our sin or more highly of ourselves. Joseph in thus addressing his brethren did, in fact, but add to their feelings the tenderness that is in all religious conviction, and that springs out of the consciousness that in all our sin there has been with us a holy and loving Father, mindful of His children. This is the final stage of penitence. The knowledge that God has prevented our sin from doing the harm it might have done, does relieve the bitterness and despair with which we view our life, but at the same time it strengthens the most effectual bulwark between us and sin—love to a holy, overruling God. *Dods.*

When a man is truly penitent, and seems almost paralyzed by the perception of his guilt, to show him that God has brought good out of his evil will exalt God's grace and wisdom in his eyes, and lead him more implicitly to cling to him. It *is* a comforting thought, that while we cannot undo the sin, God has kept it from undoing us, and has overruled it for greater good to ourselves and greater blessing to others than, perhaps, might otherwise have been attained. We can never be as we were before we committed it. Always there will be some sadness in our hearts and lives connected with it, and springing out of it. But still, if we really repent of it and return to God, there may come to us "meat out of the eater, and sweet out of the bitter." It may give us sympathy with others, and fit us for being helpful to others, so that, though we may be sadly conscious of the evil of our course, we may yet see that through it all God was preparing us for the saving of those who, humanly speaking, but for our instrumentality would have gone down to perdition. But mark the condition—if we truly repent. There is no comfort otherwise. W. M. T.

**7.** On every word here a strong emphasis may be laid. It is not *you*, but *God*—it is not you that *sold* me, but God who *sent* me—Egypt and Canaan must both have perished, had not a merciful provision been made—*you* were come down hither, and God sent me *before* you—sent me here to *preserve life*. A. C.——**To save you alive.** God's Israel is the particular care of God's providence. Joseph reckoned that his advancement was designed, not so much to save a whole kingdom of Egyptians, as to preserve a small family of Israelites: *for the Lord's portion is his people;* whatever goes with others, they shall be secured. Providence looks a great way forward, and has a long reach; even long before the years of plenty, Providence was preparing for the supply of Jacob's house in the years of famine. The psalmist praises God for this (105 : 17), *He sent a man before them, even Joseph.* God sees his work from the beginning to the end, but we do not. H.

So far as his brethren were concerned, their machinations were malignant; yet were they all threads in that wonderful web of Providence which was partially unfolded in the four hundred years' captivity, and more fully in the fortunes of the Jewish nation, and the plan of redemption. J. W. A ——Joseph's career is just predestination made familiar, and the Providence of God made palpable. It burns and shines with present Deity, and while it says to the sinner, Be sure your sins will find you out, and tells that what man means for evil God

manages for good, it also proclaims—"The counsel of the Lord standeth forever." *Hamilton.*

**8. He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord and ruler.** You might have fancied that these words would have been uttered first. The dignity seemed so much the greater to be lord over a great kingdom, than to preserve a little Palestine family. But it could not be greater in the mind of Joseph; his human affections made the support of that little family a dearer object to him than Pharaoh and all Egypt. And his affections did not give out a false note, they responded to God's own teaching and inspiration; the support of that family was not only a higher and nearer duty to himself, it was a mightier service to mankind. He was maintaining, so he believed, a seed in which all families of the earth were to be blessed; a witness for the divine order upon earth; a witness against all contradictions and subversions of that order. But though this obligation was first, it did not exclude the other. His glory in Egypt had not been sought for by himself, it had been thrust upon him. God, who had sent him to save his own family by a great deliverance, had surely just as much proposed that he should be a father to Pharaoh and a lord of his land. So Joseph judged; on that faith he acted. *Maurice.* ——It was God that brought him to the knowledge of Pharaoh, and gave him favor in his sight. It was God that exalted him, and endowed him with knowledge, and wisdom, and authority, to be an eminent benefactor to Pharaoh and his kingdom. He looked beyond his brethren to God when he thought upon his afflictions, and beyond Pharaoh to God when he thought of his exaltation. Thus he bears his affliction with meekness and his elevation with humility. *Bush.*

**9.** There is one quality which runs like a thread through Joseph's whole history, *his affection for his father.* When his brethren first came before him, his question was, "Is your *father* yet alive?" Again the question was, "Is your *father* well, the *old man* of whom ye spake, is he yet alive?" Afterward Judah came near unto him, and entreated him for his brother, telling him how that he had been "surety to his *father*" to bring him back, how that "his *father* was an old man," and that this was the "child of his old age, and that he loved him,"—how it would come to pass that if he should not see the lad with him he would die, and his gray hairs be brought with sorrow to the grave; for "how shall I go to my *father*, and the lad be not with me?—lest, peradventure, I see the evil that shall come on my *father.*" Then Joseph's firmness forsook him—he could not refrain himself any longer, and made himself known to his brethren. Then, even in the paroxysm which came on him (for he wept aloud so that the Egyptians heard), still his first words uttered from the fulness of his heart were, "Doth *my father* yet live?" He now bids them hasten and bring the old man down, bearing to him tokens of his love and tidings of his glory. He goes to meet him—he presents himself unto him, and falls on his neck and weeps on his neck a good while—he provides for him and his household out of the fat of the land—he sets him before Pharaoh By and by he hears that he is sick, and hastens to visit him—he receives his blessing—watches his death-bed. And afterward it is the *father's* memory which his brethren count upon and appeal to, in their fear lest Joseph should requite to them the evil they had done. *Blunt.*

**14, 15.** After sending a warm request to Jacob to come and see all his glory in Egypt, he turned to Benjamin, and fell upon his neck and wept. "Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them, and after that his brethren talked with him." How natural it all is! How exquisitely told! and how remarkable that there should be no effort on the part of the narrator to describe the surprise of the brothers at the unexpected revelation, or to recount the conversation which followed on the reconciliation! W. M. T.——The narrative contains no evidence that there was any recital of past wrongs. They had been many, and had left arrows of anguish within the soul. But they are left unrecounted. Their rehearsal could effect no good. The past is irreparable. Let the waters of oblivion bury the crimes and their consequences; conscience has done its work, and now human intermeddling may do more injury than good. J. S. V.

**24. See that ye fall not out by the way.** Chaldee: *Do not contend.* The brothers were in effect forbidden to accuse each other with respect to the past. Joseph had seen the violent agitation of their minds, both when they were put in prison, and when he made himself known to them. He had already heard from Reuben some severe reflections on his brethren, and he was afraid lest they should either feel more uneasiness than he wished them to do, or exasperate one another by reflections on their former conduct. In the course of their long journey their conversation would turn naturally on the remarkable events that

had taken place, and without a strong guard both on their hearts and their lips they would be in danger of conceiving mutual resentments, hurtful to their comfort and their peace. If he had forgiven them all, it was highly reasonable that they should forgive one another. Joseph therefore was a peacemaker both by precept and example. *Bush.*

# Section 73.

## JACOB RECEIVES TIDINGS. THIRD BLESSING AT BEERSHEBA.

GENESIS 45 : 25–28 ; 46 : 1–27.

45 : 25 AND they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their
26 father. And they told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land
27 of Egypt. And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the
words of Joseph, which he had said unto them : and when he saw the wagons which
28 Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived : and Israel said, It
is enough ; Joseph my son is yet alive : I will go and see him before I die.
46 : 1 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered
2 sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of
3 the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the
God of thy father : fear not to go down into Egypt ; for I will there make of thee a great
4 nation : I will go down with thee into Egypt ; and I will also surely bring thee up again :
5 and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. And Jacob rose up from Beer sheba :
and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives,
6 in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and
their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob,
7 and all his seed with him : his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his
sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.
8 And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and
9 his sons : Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. And the sons of Reuben : Hanoch, and Pallu, and
10 Hezron, and Carmi. And the sons of Simeon ; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and
11 Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman. And the sons of Levi ;
12 Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of Judah ; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and
Perez, and Zerah : but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez
13 were Hezron and Hamul. And the sons of Issachar ; Tola, and Puvah, and Iob, and
14 Shimron. And the sons of Zebulun ; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. These are the sons
15 of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah : all the
16 souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three. And the sons of Gad ; Ziphion,
17 and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. And the sons of Asher ;
Imnah, and Ishvah, and Ishvi, and Beriah, and Serah their sister : and the sons of
18 Beriah ; Heber, and Malchiel. These are the sons of Zilpah, which Laban gave to Leah
19 his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls. The sons of Rachel
20 Jacob's wife ; Joseph and Benjamin. And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born
Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-phera priest of On bare unto
21 him. And the sons of Benjamin ; Bela, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman,
22 Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. These are the sons of Rachel, which
23 were born to Jacob : all the souls were fourteen. And the sons of Dan ; Hushim. And
24 the sons of Naphtali ; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. These are the sons of
25 Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob : all
26 the souls were seven. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of

27 his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six ; and the sons of Joseph, which were born to him in Egypt, were two souls : all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

**45 : 25–28.** Two things his sons told him ; that Joseph was alive, and that he was governor of Egypt. But for Joseph's *glory* and *dominion* Jacob does not rejoice as one greatly affected with it. It was his *life* that gave him the joy : he said, "It is enough ; Joseph my son is yet alive." *Bp. Kidder.*

**Ch. 46.** The removal of the chosen family to Egypt was an essential part of the great plan which God had traced out to their father Abraham. The promise had now been given two hundred years, and they had neither possessions nor family alliances in the promised land. But they would soon have sought for both ; and the character already manifested by Jacob's sons augured ill for their preserving either purity or piety amid the Canaanites. Their present relation to Canaan must be broken off, that it might be formed anew in due time. They must be placed among a people with whom they could not mix, but from whom they might learn the arts of civilization and industry ; and there, under the discipline of affliction, the family must be consolidated into a nation. P. S.——The promise God made to Abraham, to give his posterity the land of Canaan, could not be performed till that family was grown strong enough to take and keep possession of it. In the mean time they were necessitated to reside among idolaters, and to reside unmixed ; but whoever examines their history will see that the Israelites had ever a violent propensity to join themselves to Gentile nations, and practise their manners. God, therefore, in his infinite wisdom, brought them into Egypt, and kept them there during this period, the only place where they could remain for so long a time safe and unconfounded with the natives, the ancient Egyptians being by numerous institutions forbidden all fellowship with strangers ; and bearing a particular aversion to the profession of the Israelites, who were shepherds. Thus the natural dispositions of the Israelites, which in Egypt occasioned their superstitions and in consequence the necessity of a burdensome ritual, would in any other country have absorbed them into *gentilism*, and confounded them with idolaters. From the Israelites going into Egypt arises a new occasion to adore the footsteps of Eternal Wisdom, in his dispensations to his chosen people. *Warburton.*——In Egypt they could become a great nation without any difficulties or obstructions, and without the least interference with their national and religious peculiarities. Such was the fertility and extent of Goshen that there was no occasion for them to be scattered, and no inducement to the members of particular tribes to separate from the general body. There was no fear of their mixing with the Egyptians and giving up their national and religious integrity. As Goshen was just as well fitted for agriculture as it was for grazing, it naturally induced them to combine the pursuits of farming, gardening, and vine-growing with those of their earlier nomad life, and thus fostered a taste for that mode of life, which was afterward to form an essential part of their national existence. In the midst of the science, civilization, and industry of Egypt, Israel was in the best school for that general culture, which they would afterward require. K.——Egypt was the seat of the strongest worldly power, and therefore furnished the best instrumentality for the infliction of such severe sufferings as would awaken in the minds of the Israelites a longing for deliverance and a readiness to submit to their God ; while, at the same time, it offered a splendid field for the manifestation of the power and justice and mercy of the God of Israel in the rescue of his people and the judgment of their enemies. *Hengs.*——These two elements are expressly mentioned in the revelation which was made by God to Abraham (ch. 15 : 13–16). Thus Israel obtained *the character of a redeemed people*, which was of such great importance in its future destiny, and *Jehovah* then showed himself to be, what he was to continue to be in a constantly increasing degree, *the Redeemer in Israel.* K.

**46 : 1.** Jacob journeys from Hebron 25 miles south-west to Beersheba. This place had become memorable by the sojournings there of Abraham and Isaac, and himself also, and by the many testimonies there received of the favor and protection of their covenant God. This therefore he selects as the place for the offering up of his solemn sacrifices, a place lying on the borders of that land of promise which he was now leaving forever, and where so many familiar objects and sacred recollections would aid the devout sentiments of his heart. In his approaches to God he did not forget to avail himself of the covenant made with his fathers and of the promises already on record.

**3. I am God, the God of thy father.**

As such the patriarch sought Jehovah, and as such he found him. He well knew that Isaac had ever found God faithful to all his gracious engagements, and nothing would yield him stronger consolation than to be assured that the same loving-kindness and truth would be extended to him also. This language, accordingly, was a virtual renewal of the covenant of Abraham, and would leave nothing to be desired on the score of assurance. *Bush.*

**Fear not to go down into Egypt.** On several accounts Jacob might fear to go, with his whole family especially, into Egypt. Abraham had been injured there ; it had been foretold that his seed should be afflicted by the Egyptians : Isaac had been warned not to go into Egypt : the Egyptians were men of very different usages and manners from the Hebrews : they were also of a different religion, and Jacob besides might fear lest by this means his posterity should be deprived of the land of Canaan. *Bp. Kidder.*——Abraham, Isaac, Jacob had all been placed and settled in Canaan with a promise that they should in future possess the land. Moreover, Egypt was, not only a heathen land, but one in which heathenism was specially developed and systematized. Jacob might therefore naturally fear to find in it dangers both worldly and spiritual. Hence the promise of God's presence and protection was signally needed. E. H. B.

**3, 4.** Every doubt is dispelled by this divine manifestation. He may go down confidently, no evil shall befall him. Even in Egypt the covenant shall be fulfilled—God will make of him *there a great nation.* God himself will accompany him on his journey, be with him in the strange land, and even bring back his bones to rest with those of his fathers. He shall see Joseph, and this same beloved son shall be with him in his last hours, and do the last kind office for him : *Joseph shall put his hands upon thy eyes.* A. C.——Such a promise was not only an assurance, that God in love to him would order the circumstances of his latter end to his own satisfaction, but that he and Joseph should not be again separated. Long had this dear son been lost to him, though still alive, but now he learns that Joseph is to survive him, and that he should enjoy his society till death. *Bush.*

In Beersheba the patriarch offered "sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac," and there the faithful Lord spake to him "in the visions of the night." His words gave Jacob this fourfold assurance, that God *was* the covenant-God, and that Jacob need not fear to go down into Egypt ; that God would *there* make of him a great nation, in other words, that the transformation from the family to the nation should take place in Egypt ; that God would go down with him ; and, lastly, that he would surely bring him up again. And each of these four assurances was introduced by an emphatic *I,* to indicate the personal and direct source of all these blessings. Thus strengthened, Israel pursued his journey in confidence of spirit. A. E.

**8–25.** This document is one that would be of the highest importance to the Israelites when taking possession of Canaan, being, as it were, their title-deed to the land. Accordingly we find that it is drawn up in legal manner, representing as sons some who were really grandsons, but who took as heads of families the place usually held by sons. We next find that it represents them all as born in Canaan, not in a natural sense, but as the rightful heirs of the country. Technically every head of a family was born in Canaan, and thus the danger was obviated of an objection to the possession of this rank being accorded to one born in Egypt. R. P. S.

**27. All the souls which came into Egypt were threescore and ten.** There is a remarkable difference between this verse and the foregoing ; *there* those only are numbered who came with Jacob into Egypt, amounting to no more than threescore and six : but *here* are numbered all that came into Egypt, first and last, comprehending Jacob, Joseph, and his two sons, and making up threescore and ten. *Bp. Patrick.*——The whole account of Jacob's sons and grandsons, who went along with him into Egypt, stands thus : by Leah, thirty-two ; by Zilpah, sixteen ; by Rachel, eleven ; by Bilhah, seven : in all sixty-six, exclusive of Jacob himself, and of Joseph and his two sons, which make up the seventy : and it was necessary that these genealogies should be exactly registered, not only to distinguish each tribe, and thereby discover the Messiah, when he came ; but (as it is in the case before us) to make it apparent, that the increase of Israel, even under oppression, should bear a fair proportion to the promise made to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed. *Stackhouse.*

At Acts 7 : 14, they are said by Stephen, following the Septuagint, to have been in number seventy-five souls, because there, from 1 Chron. 7 : 14, the five sons of Manasseh and Ephraim are comprehended. The great Old Testament people sprang from twelve sons and seventy souls ; the New Testament people from twelve apostles and seventy disciples. C. G. B.

[Yet another solution.] In this statement the wives of Jacob's sons, who formed part of the household, are omitted ; but they amounted to *nine ;* for of the *twelve* wives of the *twelve* sons of Jacob, Judah's wife was dead, and Simeon's also, as we may collect from his youngest son *Shaul* by a Canaanitess (ver. 10), and Joseph's wife was already in Egypt. These *nine* wives therefore, added to the *sixty-six*, give *seventy-five* souls, the whole amount of Jacob's household that went down with him into Egypt : critically corresponding with the statement in the New Testament, that "Joseph sent for his father *Jacob and all his kindred*, amounting to *seventy-five* souls." *Hales.*

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*God's special revelations in the three successive dispensations through which He has guided His Church.* First was the Period of Patriarchs, of which we have the description and history in the Book of Genesis. It was adapted to the childhood of the race : but when the time came for it to give place to a written Law, and an established Ritual, not everything in it was abolished. The grand central doctrine of one God, the duty of religious obedience, the paternal Providence that leads men out and in all their days, the prophetic appointment of sacrifices pointing forward to the Cross of Christ, the promise of the Messiah at the Garden of Eden, the institution of the Sabbath when God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, the justifying faith of Abraham who believed and trusted God so that it was counted to him for righteousness, the covenant by which children are bound up in the same family-blessing of Faith with their parents,—all these you find in that Book of Genesis, and in that first Biblical dispensation. Were they abolished when Moses came, with the Tables of the Law in his hands at Mount Sinai ? Not one of them. Very much in that Mosaic age was new, — statutes, tabernacles, ordinances, and one national seat of the national worship. But much more was old than new,— and of every one of those "old things" just mentioned there remains some memorial and some hereditary power even now in our third and Christian age,—Christ promising, even of its final consummation, that His spiritual followers shall be privileged to sit down in the new kingdom above with the old believers and patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There is a sublime and majestic unity in these revelations. Moses is, in turn, superseded by Christ ; the Law by grace and truth ; Jerusalem by the Church universal. The three dispensations of Holy Scripture are one, because within them all is the everlasting Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." F. D. H.

### Transmission of Events in Patriarchal Times.

We certainly possess among the recovered tablets of Chaldea, original inscriptions as old as the presumed date of Abram's migration (somewhere about B.C. 2000), as well as later Assyrian translations made from Chaldean originals which must once have existed. There is, therefore, no inherent improbability in the conjecture that the emigrant carried with him from Ur, if not written documents in the shape of clay tablets, at least a knowledge of letters and the power to use them for literary purposes. So that the use of letters may have been imported into Canaan by the family of Abraham, although in his negotiations with the native tribes, ruder and more primitive methods had to be resorted to for recording transactions. Assuming, however, that the incidents of patriarchal life, which have been preserved to us in the Book of Genesis, had to be, in the first place, handed down by oral tradition alone, it is still possible to see how they might descend to a more literary age with no material change even in their form, and no change at all in their substance. Such a natural transmission of family narratives is, of course, by no means necessary to sustain the faith of those who, on quite other evidence, have received the book as part of a divine revelation. It is, however, of great value to the scientific student of Scripture ; while even the uninquiring believer, who knows how sparing of needless miracle the divine procedure has always been, may find satisfaction in seeing that the history of the patriarchs might easily come into the hands of Moses in the shape of written *mémoires pour servir*, without calling for any supernatural communication of them to his mind.

The total period covered by three lives from the birth of Abraham to the death of Jacob is 315 years. But the three lives overlap each other very thoroughly. Isaac was seventy-five when he lost his father—the sole original witness to all the events which preceded (let us say) his own offering up on Mount Moriah. During these seventy-five years the son had been without interruption his father's companion ; so that long before the elder passed away, all that he had to tell of his memorable life experiences became, past all risk of being forgotten, the possession of the younger man. The events actually recorded are precisely those which it is most certain Abraham would repeat over and over again to his son. His call and emigration ; his successive revelations from heaven ; the raid of the Elamites and the fall of Sodom ; the covenant with God and the rite of circumcision : these were things on which both the instincts of an old man and the duty he owed posterity would lead him to dwell with unwearied repetition. Oft-repeated tales tend to become fixed even in their details and modes of expression ; and there is no reason to doubt that when Abraham died, Isaac remained as accurate and safe a repository for the sacred history as even the original actor and spectator in it all had been.

Isaac's son only outlived him by some five-and-twenty years. For the first fifteen years of his life, Jacob was brought up on Abraham's knees. For the first seventy-eight years he kept his father company ; so that he carried with him into exile in Haran a middle-aged man's full knowledge of all that his father knew. Besides that, he returned again to reside with his aged father, some twenty years or so before the death of the latter. Again, therefore, in the ripeness of age, with his interest in the revelations of his house quickened now through his own personal experience and acknowledged position as the heir of promise, Jacob enjoyed the amplest opportunity for thoroughly mastering the story as Abraham had taught it to Isaac. Of his own personal adventures, Jacob was of course a witness at first hand ; and it is noticeable that after he enters on the scene as an actor (at the opening of chapter 27), the narrative becomes very much more ample and discursive. No longer confined to the most essential and memorable incidents, it ranges over a wider area, and enters into a crowd of subordinate details.

At the age of one hundred and thirty, therefore, when Jacob entered Egypt, he carried down to that land of literature the entire stock of tradition which had come to him from grandfather and from father, augmented by those fresh reminiscences which he himself had gathered. In Egypt he spent seventeen more years, in close and affectionate intercourse with a son whose devout intelligence was very capable of measuring the importance to future generations of his tribe of all this sacred lore now treasured up in one old man's memory ; and very well qualified, had he so pleased, to find for it a secure literary record. It is impossible, of course, to prove that Joseph or any other of his family caused to be committed to written documents the traditions of his house, as it is impossible to prove that such documents came into the hands of Moses. But we are now, at any rate, on the firm ground of a literary land, where such a preservation of the narrative was, to say the least, possible. Joseph was a member of the priestly college at On, the most famous seat of Egyptian learning. He possessed every facility, not only for having the story written, but even for securing it a place in the government archives ; where Moses, centuries after, had by an equally singular providence no less facility and motive for disinterring it. Or, for aught we know, some written form of the family tradition may even have been current among the Beni-Israel from the days of the Hebrew Vizier to the days of the Hebrew Foundling-Prince. It is sufficient to indicate by what a natural succession of circumstances the most minute facts recorded of Abraham might find a written record after an interval of only one hundred and fifteen years (from his death till the removal to Egypt), that interval being bridged by the single life of Jacob. *Dykes.*

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# Section 74.

## JACOB MEETS JOSEPH. PRESENTED TO PHARAOH. ISRAELITES SETTLED IN GOSHEN.

GENESIS 46 : 28–34 ; 47 : 1–12.

46 : 28 AND he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to shew the way before him unto Goshen ;
29 and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went
up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen ; and he presented himself unto him, and fell on
30 his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me
31 die, since I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive. And Joseph said unto his brethren,
and unto his father's house, I will go up, and tell Pharaoh, and will say unto him, My
brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me ;
32 and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of cattle ; and they have brought
33 their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when
34 Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? that ye shall say, Thy
servants have been keepers of cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and our
fathers : that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen ; for every shepherd is an abomination
unto the Egyptians.

47 : 1 Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their
flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan ; and,
2 behold, they are in the land of Goshen. And from among his brethren he took five men,
3 and presented them unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your
occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and our

4 fathers. And they said unto Pharaoh, To sojourn in the land are we come ; for there is
no pasture for thy servants' flocks ; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan : now
5 therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. And Pharaoh
6 spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee : the land
of Egypt is before thee ; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to
dwell ; in the land of Goshen let them dwell : and if thou knowest any able men among
7 them, then make them rulers over my cattle. And Joseph brought in Jacob his father,
8 and set him before Pharaoh : and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob,
9 How many are the days of the years of thy life ? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days
of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years : few and evil have been
the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of
10 the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and
11 went out from the presence of Pharaoh. And Joseph placed his father and his brethren,
and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of
12 Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his breth-
ren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

The connection of Egypt with Scripture history is long and intimate. Abraham and Sarah visited it in a time of famine about two hundred years before Jacob came into it ; and even then it was evidently in a state of high civilization. The long residence of the Israelites in it, after Joseph brought them to its fertile plains, made it in a sense their native land. Their intercourse with Egypt was suspended for a long time after the Exodus, but was resumed under Solomon and Jeroboam. In after years, the kings of Egypt frequently attacked or passed through Palestine : on one of these occasions king Josiah was slain. During the struggles of Nebuchadnezzar, a body of Jews courted the favor of the king of Egypt, and, in spite of all the efforts of Jeremiah, went to dwell in it when Jerusalem was destroyed. W. G. B.

From the same valley of the Nile, whence flowed the culture of Greece, was to flow also the religion of Palestine. That same land of ancient learning, which in the schools of Alexandria was, ages afterward, the first settled home and shelter of the wandering Christian Church, was also the first settled home and shelter of the wandering Jewish nation. Egypt was the meeting-point, geographically and historically, of the three continents of the ancient world. It could not but bear its part in the nurture of that people which was itself to influence and guide them all. A. P. S.

**28. Into the land of Goshen.** The "land of Goshen," also called Goshen simply, appears to have borne another name, "the land of Rameses" (47 : 11). It was between Joseph's residence at the time and the frontier of Palestine, and apparently the extreme province toward that frontier. Gen. 46 : 33, 34, shows that Goshen was scarcely regarded as a part of Egypt Proper, and was not peopled by Egyptians, — characteristics that would positively indicate a frontier province. Goshen was a pastoral country, where some of Pharaoh's cattle were kept. From Ex 13 : 17, 18, we infer that the land of Goshen must have in part been near the eastern side of the ancient Delta, Rameses lying within the valley now called the *Wâdi-t-Tumeylât*, about 30 miles in a direct course from the ancient western shore of the Arabian Gulf. P. S.

We gather from the Bible that the "land of Goshen," or, as it is sometimes called, "the land of Rameses," was in the eastern portion of the Delta, as it is nowhere stated that the Israelites crossed the Nile at the time of the exodus ; that it was a frontier province not far from the residence of the Pharaoh of Joseph, either Memphis or Zoan ; that it was between that place and Palestine ; and that it was a pastoral country, in which Pharaoh's own cattle were pastured, in "the best of the land." *Wilson.* ——The land of Goshen, in which, or which was, "the land of Rameses" (47 : 11), is fairly well identified. The various references to it in the Bible text and on the Egyptian monuments, as well as later historical data, all go to fix it as including the Wady Toomilât (which sweeps from above Cairo, northerly and easterly toward Lakes Timsâh and Ballah), together with more or less of the country on either side of that Wady. Ebers outlines this region graphically, when he says : "As far as it is possible to fix its ancient limitations, it exhibits the form of a cornucopia, bounded toward the east, at the widest end or opening of the cornucopia, by the water-way [the series of lakes through which runs the Suez Canal] that divides Africa from Asia. The fresh-water canal which already existed at the time of the sojourn of the Jews in Egypt, and which was reopened by M de Lesseps, washes its southern frontier ; the lake of

Mensaleh lies to the north of it, and to the west the Tanitic arm of the Nile—which has now dwindled to a narrow water-course.'' There are many who would not carry the Goshen district west of the Pelusiac arm of the Nile, but who would extend it southward somewhat below the fresh-water canal. Apart from these differences the boundaries indicated by Ebers would be generally accepted among scholars. *Trumbull.*

The ancients knew and made mention of *seven* branches and mouths of the Nile along the Southern Mediterranean coast, between the present Alexandria on the west and Port Said at the mouth of the Suez Canal on the east. Thus, beginning at Alexandria and travelling eastward toward Southern Palestine, the traveller would pass, in the time of Moses, seven *bayous* (as we would call them) and seven mouths of the Nile. First—The *Canopic* arm or bayou, which is now partly merged into the canal of Alexandria, and partly is lost in the Lake Elko. Second—The Bolbatine, or *Rosetta.* Third—The *Sebennytic* probably running into Lake Burlos. Fourth—The Bucolic or Phatnitic, at Damietta. Fifth—The *Mendesian*, emptying into Lake Mensaleh. Sixth—The *Tanitic*, running into the eastern portion of Lake Mensaleh. Seventh—The *Pelusiac*, emptying at the Eastern mouth of Lake Mensaleh, and not far west of the present Port Said and Suez Canal. This last arm of the Nile, now choked up with sand, was even in the time of Alexander, a thousand years later than Moses, so large and deep as to be navigable for Alexander's war fleet; and through it he actually ascended to Memphis and the main trunk of the Nile. We may assume then that the eastern border of Egypt at the time of Joseph extended nearly or quite to the present line of the Suez Canal. S. R.

**29, 30.** What a beautiful picture of reunion is this! "He fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." See them there! The old man not speaking, because he cannot speak,—speaking most because saying nothing. Joseph not speaking for some time. Only weeping upon one another! Then Jacob says, "Now let me die!" It was as old Simeon spake when he saw the Child of God, "Now let thy servant depart in peace." J. P.

**33, 34.** Joseph directed his brethren to introduce themselves as *shepherds*, not only in spite of the fact that shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians, but *on that very account.* His reason for doing so is apparent. In the occupation of his brethren there was the surest guarantee that their national and religious peculiarities would not be endangered or destroyed, and that they would not be absorbed by the Egyptians. The hatred and contempt which the Egyptians cherished toward the shepherd caste, as existing monuments attest by many a characteristic sign, may be traced to the fact that agriculture, with its regular and methodical habits, was the sole support of the Egyptian state, and that the irregularities of a nomad life must have appeared to a pedantic Egyptian to be rude and barbarous in the extreme. K.

Joseph's anxiety now was to secure to his people a *separate* settlement in Egypt, where they would not be mingled with the idolatrous Egyptians. But for his paramount influence with the king this would have been impossible; and at any other epoch of Egypt's history not even Joseph could have effected it. One may say with much confidence that, with their strong natural antipathy to foreigners, no *native* king could have been easily persuaded to grant the concession of territory that Joseph asked for. But the reigning Pharaoh was not of Egyptian but of Shepherd race. It will be seen at once how singularly this favored Joseph's purpose. Not only was the king free from the national prejudice, but in this national prejudice Joseph found his best argument for a *separate* allotment of land to his people. Hence the care with which he instructed his brethren to describe themselves as *shepherds* when introduced to Pharaoh: "When Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we and also our fathers; that ye may dwell [apart] in the land of Goshen; for every *shepherd* is an abomination unto the Egyptians." These last words—otherwise so difficult—become clear at once on the supposition that Pharaoh was himself of shepherd race. J. P. N.

**47 : 5, 6.** The number of those who entered Egypt with Jacob has been reasonably calculated at "several thousands." To place such a body of foreigners "in the best of the land," on the eastern frontier, where they could readily give admission to others, is what no king of either the Old or the New Empire would have been likely to have done; but it is exactly what might have been expected of one of the Hyksos. G. R.

It is to secure that Israel grow without let or hindrance, that Jacob's household is removed to a land where protection and seclusion would at once be secured to them. In the land of

Goshen, secured from molestation partly by the influence of Joseph, but much more by the caste-prejudices of the Egyptians, and their hatred of all foreigners and shepherds in particular, they enjoyed such prosperity and attained so rapidly the magnitude of a nation that some, forgetful alike of the promise of God and of the natural advantages of Israel's position, have refused to credit the accounts given us of the increase in their population. In a land so roomy, so fertile, and so secluded as that in which they were now settled, they had every advantage for making the transition from a family to a nation. Here they were preserved from all temptation to mingle with neighbors of a different race, and so lose their special place as a people called out by God to stand alone. *Dods.*

**7. Brought in Jacob his father.** What a picture of life and reality have we here! The feeble patriarch, leaning upon the arm of his recovered son, is led into the presence of the courteous monarch, who receives him not as an inferior, nor as a dependent even, but with all the respect due to his great age, and with a reverent feeling that in this very old man, the representative of another age, or of another world, there was something of a sacred and prophetical character. *Lange.*——**Jacob blessed Pharaoh.** We see here the type of the true relation in which Israel was to stand to heathenism in all their future intercourse. K.——"Beyond contradiction, the less is blessed of the better" (Heb. 7 : 7), or greater. In one respect Pharaoh was greater than Jacob; but in another Jacob was far greater than he. He was a son of Abraham, whose peculiar honor and prerogative it was, that he and his posterity should be blessings to mankind. He was also himself a man who "as a prince had power with God and men, and prevailed." The blessing of such a man was of no small account, for God would not suffer his words to fall to the ground. *Bush.*——When Abraham went down to Egypt, unsent of the Lord, he brought trouble on Pharaoh and all his house. But when Jacob, guided and instructed by the Lord, goes down into Egypt, he carries a blessing with him. So when we are in the line of duty, in the path that God marks out for us, we are sure to carry blessings wherever we go. *Gibson.*

Throughout this narrative of Joseph, there is a life-likeness in the character of Pharaoh that shows him to us as one of the most veritable objects presented in history. And what an air of reality in all these scenes here so exquisitely portrayed! It is no invented tale. The picture stands out vividly before us; age has not dimmed its colors; remoteness of scene, and wide diversity of life and manners, cannot weaken its effect. We see the figures distinctly moving on that far-off ancient shore. It is brought nigh to us in such a way that we could almost as well doubt our senses as think of calling it in question. At all events, no mythical theory can explain it. No "higher criticism," as it is called, can ever make satisfactory to a truly thoughtful mind the comparison sometimes drawn between these "Bible stories" and the cloudy fables that characterize the early annals of other ancient nations. We may as well doubt of Cæsar and Alexander, yea, of Napoleon and of Washington, as of Jacob, Joseph, and Pharaoh. *Lange.*

**8. How many are the days of the years of thy life? 9. My pilgrimage.** Pharaoh asked of "the days of the years of his life." He replies by speaking of the days of the years of his pilgrimage. The patriarchs spoke of life as a pilgrimage or sojourning, because they sought another country, that is a heavenly (Heb. 11 : 9, 13). Earth was not their home, but their journey homeward. E. H. B——If we look into the story of those friends of heaven, the ancestors of the Israelitish nation, we find them sojourning in a land that was not theirs; dwelling only in tents, soon pitched and as soon removed again; having no ground of their own to set their foot on save only a possession of a burying-place, and that purchased of the inhabitants; where they might rest from their travels, till they shall pass at the resurrection of the just to their durable inheritance in the kingdom of God. Such was Jacob's notion of human life, expressed in his answer to the Egyptian monarch who had inquired his age. *Bp. Horne.*

**Few and evil have been the days.** In the verse days and years are repeated and repeated, sounding in the ear like the tolling of a time-bell. Life, in Jacob's estimate—a pilgrimage, no stoppage by the way, no home along the passage, rough the road often and weary the traveller; but beyond death and the grave another and better country, even a heavenly. The length of his own life Jacob compares with that of his immediate ancestors. Isaac had lived one hundred and eighty years; Abraham one hundred and seventy-five. He had reached but one hundred and thirty; and evil as well as few had the days of the years of his pilgrimage been. Few men have had such a series of domestic trials and sufferings to look back upon as he had, from the day of that dark deed which drove him from Hebron. Exile

from home ; separation from a mother he was never to see again ; seven years of labor for the object of his love, and then humiliatingly deceived ; twenty years of toil in the house of a selfish uncle, the drought consuming him by day, the frost by night, sleep departing from his eyes, his wages changed ten times ; sons multiplying rapidly around him, the crowded household bringing but little comfort ; a daughter's dishonor, her brothers' deliberate fraud and desperate cruelty ; Rachel's premature and melancholy death ; Reuben's incest ; Judah's disgrace ; the falsehood and malignity of the sale of Joseph, the presentation of the bloody coat of many colors—a long line of sorrows. How often and how strangely the specific form of his own early offence repeated itself and was reflected back upon him ; his uncle cheating him as he had cheated Isaac ; the very kind of sins that he had committed against his father and brother, committed in an aggravated form by his own children against himself and toward one another. But if the discipline was singularly adapted to the subject, and singularly protracted and severe, it was as singularly successful. He fancied, as he stood before Pharaoh, looking back upon the past, that he was standing on the very border of eternity. He spake as one who thought that his days were numbered. He was mistaken. There were seventeen years still in store for him. These closing years in Egypt offer a striking contrast to those which preceded them. They were years of unruffled rest, of unshadowed prosperity. Not a single disturbing or distressing incident—no difficulty, no sorrow, no death ; things ran on so evenly, so calmly, so brightly, there is nothing to record. The first five were years of famine in Egypt, but the Israelites were not neglected in the distribution of the hoarded stores. The other twelve were years of plenty, during which "Israel dwelt in the land of Goshen, and they had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly." The quiet evening of a long, dark, troubled day, it was a period of perfect outward rest and enjoyment ; and over its close there shines a light which tells us that there was an inward peace, and trust, and hope of which the outward was an image. W. H.

All the points in which men differ, health and strength, high or low estate, happiness or misery, vanish before this common lot, mortality. Pass a few years, and the longest-lived will be gone ; nor will what is passed profit him then, except in its consequences. And this sense of the nothingness of life, impressed on us by the very fact that it comes to an end, is much deepened, when we contrast it with the capabilities of us who live it. Had Jacob lived Methuselah's age, he would have called it short. This is what we all feel, though at first sight it seems a contradiction, that even though the days as they go be slow, and be laden with many events, or with sorrows or dreariness lengthening them out and making them tedious, yet the year passes quick though the hours tarry, and time bygone is as a dream, though we thought it would never go while it was going. And the reason seems to be this ; that, when we contemplate human life in itself, in however small a portion of it, we see implied in it the presence of a soul, the energy of a spiritual existence, of an accountable being ; consciousness tells us this concerning it every moment. But when we look back on it in memory, we view it but externally, as a mere lapse of time, as a mere earthly history. And the longest duration of this external world is as dust and weighs nothing against one moment's life of the world within. Thus we are ever expecting great things from life, from our internal consciousness every moment of our having souls ; and we are ever being disappointed, on considering what we have gained from time past, or can hope from time to come. And life is ever promising and never fulfilling ; and hence, however long it be, our days are few and evil. *Newman.*

The holy patriarch who had the name of Israel had a life made up largely of sorrows. His posterity have afflictions left them for their legacy. Egypt, the wilderness, Canaan, Babylon, were the stages of Israel's tragedies. The spiritual Israel is in all the parts and ages of the world a distressed member. Witness that "book of martyrs" epitomized (Heb. 11). Of all people God would have his Israel holiest, and he corrects them to make them partakers of his holiness. If he suffers weeds in the forest, he endures them not in the garden. Affliction is appointed for the consumption of sin. It is poison to lust and food to graces. The sheep of Christ thrive best in shortest pasture. Affliction is God's touchstone, to difference between the precious and the vile ; his fan, to sever between the wheat and the chaff ; his furnace, to separate between the metal and the dross. God sees it best for his people (like waters) to be in motion : should they stand still they would soon putrefy. The rest of the people of God remains. It is too much to have two heavens. He who said he should never be removed, like Peter in the mount, knew not what he said. That saints may be always safe, they must never be secure. Of all people those

should be least censured who are most corrected: they may be, nay are most like to be, Israelites. The happiness of Israel is not to be judged by outward appearances. The Israels, the princes of God, are in this world but princes under a disguise. This life is but the obscurity of their adoption. We see their combats, we see not their crowns: we view them in the tents of Kedar, not within the curtains of Solomon. *Jenkyn.*

## Section 75.

### JOSEPH'S PROCEDURE WITH THE EGYPTIANS.

GENESIS 47 : 13–26.

13 AND there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of
14 Egypt and the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all
the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which
15 they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. And when the money
was all spent in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto
Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for *our* money fail-
16 eth. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.
17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the
horses, and for the flocks, and for the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread
18 in exchange for all their cattle for that year. And when that year was ended, they came unto
him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide from my lord, how that our money
is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my lord's; there is nought left in the sight of my
19 lord, but our bodies, and our lands: wherefore should we die before thine eyes, both we and
our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh:
20 and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land be not desolate. So Joseph
bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because
21 the famine was sore upon them: and the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the people, he
removed them to the cities from one end of the border of Egypt even to the other end thereof.
22 Only the land of the priests bought he not: for the priests had a portion from Pharaoh, and
23 did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their land. Then
Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh:
24 lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass at the ingather-
ings, that ye shall give a fifth unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the
field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.
25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we
26 will be Pharaoh's servants. And Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt unto
this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; only the land of the priests alone became not
Pharaoh's.

**13–26.** In the years of scarcity Joseph sold corn to the people, first for their money, then for their cattle, and, when both were done, for their land, which they spontaneously offered Having thus gained possession of the whole country, he again disposed of it to the people on definite principles, making them the king's vassals, and obliging them to pay annually the fifth part of the produce in lieu of ground-rent. Only the lands of the priesthood remained untouched, since their revenues from the royal treasury had protected them from the consequences of the famine. Profane writers and the monuments confirm the Biblical account, in so far as they distinctly state that the peasantry were not the landed proprietors, and that the priests possessed real property free of taxation. K.

The policy of Joseph was simply to economize during the seven years of abundance to such an extent that provision might be made against the seven years of famine. He calculated that

one fifth of the produce of years so extraordinarily plenteous would serve for the seven scarce years. This fifth he bought in the king's name from the people. When the years of famine came, the people were referred to Joseph ; and, till their money was gone, he sold corn to them, probably not at famine prices. Next he acquired their cattle, and finally, in exchange for food, they yielded to him both their lands and their persons. So that the result of the whole was, that the people who would otherwise have perished were preserved, and in return for this preservation they paid a tax or rent on their farm-lands to the amount of one fifth of their produce. The people ceased to be proprietors of their own farms, but they were not slaves with no interest in the soil, but tenants sitting at easy rents—a fair enough exchange for being preserved in life. This kind of taxation is eminently fair in principle, securing, as it does, that the wealth of the king and government shall vary with the prosperity of the whole land. *Dods.*

It is somewhat remarkable, that amid the vicissitudes to which that country has been subject, the compact between the ruler and his subjects, entered into by Joseph, has always subsisted there in principle. To this day the fellah, or peasant, in Egypt, cultivates the land for his sovereign, and receives a portion of the produce for his own wants. But, amid the grasping exactions of our own age, and the harsh oppressions to which he is subject by the government and its officers, he has much reason to regret that the moderation of Joseph does not actuate its present rulers. *Kit.*

This whole transaction, which did not affect the Israelites themselves, is here mentioned so circumstantially, because afterward among them a similar right was introduced in reference to their highest King—God Himself. He had given and divided the land of Canaan to them. They were all His servants. They must pay to Him a double tithe. Of this God gave one part to the priests and Levites for their maintenance (as Pharaoh to the Egyptian priests), the other was consumed in high feasts at sacrificial meals, which were given to the Levites, the widows, orphans, and the poor. Those relations of dependence of person and property on the king, and of acknowledgment of his supreme right over all by the payment of the fifths, was Israel to transfer to its invisible King. The main principle of the whole outer life of the Israelites was always to be in subjection to Him. *Gerl.*

**16. Give me your cattle.** This was the wisest measure that could be adopted, both for the preservation of the *people*, and of the *cattle* also. As the people had not grain for their own sustenance, consequently they could have none for their cattle. The cattle being bought by Joseph, were supported at the royal expense, and very likely returned to the people at the end of the famine ; for how else could they cultivate their ground, transport their merchandise? etc.

**21. As for the people, he removed them to cities.** Joseph was influenced merely by *humanity* and *prudence.* As the corn was laid up in the cities, it was more convenient to bring them to places where they might be within reach of an easy distribution. Thus the *country*, which could afford no sustenance, was abandoned for the time being that the people might be fed in places where the provision was deposited. A. C.

**22. Only the land of the priests bought he not.** The Egyptian priests were obliged to provide all sacrifices and to bear all the charges of the national religion ; and religion was in those days a matter of very great expense to them. The numerous sacrifices that were offered in these times could not be provided, nor the preparations and ceremonies in offering them performed except at a very great charge. The priests of Egypt were the king's counsellors and assistants : they were the professors and cultivators of astronomy, without which even agriculture itself could not have proceeded : they were the keepers of the public registers, memoirs, and chronicles of the kingdom : in a word, under the king, they were the magistrates, and filled all the prime offices. So that Pharaoh might well think that they had not too much to support the stations they were to act in ; and for that reason he ordered that no tax should be laid upon them. *Shuckford.*

**23. Behold, I have bought you this day.** The bargain could not be denied : but he would not insist upon it strictly. He requires only a *fifth* part of the increase of their ground for the king ; and tells them the rest shall be their own. Herein he showed himself both a good man and a wise statesman, in taking away all matter of complaint from the people. *Bp. Patrick.*

It fully appears that the kingdom of Egypt was, previous to the time of Joseph, a limited monarchy. The king had his estates ; the priests had their lands ; and the common people their patrimony, independently of both. We may conclude from those purchases, that Pharaoh had no power to levy taxes upon his subjects to increase his own revenue, until he

had bought the original right which each individual had in his possessions. **24**. And when Joseph bought this for the king, he raised the crown an ample revenue (though he restored the lands), by obliging each to pay *one fifth* of the product to the king. A. C.——Long after this it was observed by an ancient writer and traveller in Egypt (Diodorus), that the kings were enabled, by the abundant revenues derived from the crown lands, to defray the expenses of wars and of their own regal state, and to reward those who distinguished themselves in the public service, without overwhelming the common people with taxes. T. J. C.—— Joseph certainly had in view no less the good of the country than the interest of the king ; inasmuch as he converted the disproportionate division of the landed property into an equable leasing of it in small portions, for an annual rent. *Delit.*

In all these respects, his political measures have been strongly vindicated, not only as being directed by God, but as being *obviously* the best, everything considered, for the safety, honor, and welfare of his sovereign and the kingdom. It is true, he bought the lands of the people for the king ; but he *farmed* them to the original occupiers again, at the moderate and fixed crown rent of *one-fifth part* of the produce. A. C.——Thus did he provide for the *liberty and independence of the people*, while he strengthened the *authority* of the *king* by making him sole proprietor of the lands. And to secure the people from further exaction, Joseph made it a law over all the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh (the king) should have only the fifth part : which law subsisted to the time of Moses. By this wise regulation the people had four fifths of the produce of the lands for their own use, and were exempted from any further taxes, the king being bound to support his civil and military establishment out of the crown rents. *Hales.*

**25.** The peculiar nature of the land, its dependence on the overflow of the Nile, and the unthrifty habits of the cultivators, made it desirable to establish a system of centralization, perhaps to introduce some general principle of irrigation ; in modern phraseology, to promote the prosperity of the country by great government works, in preference to leaving all to the uncertainty of individual enterprise. If this were so, then the saying " Thou hast saved our lives" was no language of Eastern adulation, but the verdict of a grateful people. E. H. B. ——Besides being indebted to Joseph for their preservation, the Egyptians owed to him an extension of their influence ; for, as all the lands round about became dependent on Egypt for provision, they must have contracted a respect for the Egyptian administration. They must also have added greatly to Egypt's wealth, and during these years of constant traffic many commercial connections must have been formed which in future years would be of untold value to Egypt. But above all, from the confidence Joseph won with the people, there seems every reason to believe that the permanent alterations he made on their tenure of land were considered as competent as certainly they were bold. *Dods.*

**25, 26.** The result of all this was that at the close of the seven years the people and all that belonged to them were the property of the king. Egypt under its Shepherd Pharaoh was precisely in the condition England would have been in under her Norman conquerors, if we suppose the barons swept away, and no middle class left between the Norman king and the Saxon serfs, except the priests. But Joseph was far too enlightened, and too humane, to intend to leave the whole population in a state of villenage or serfdom. From the vantage-ground of the position in which the famine had left him he proposed to restore to the people their freedom, and restore to them their lands, only on a new tenure. They were not to have them as freeholders, but as *tenants of the crown*, paying one-fifth portion to the king as *rent* forever.

Thus Joseph had effected two things : first, he had saved the people from starvation ; and, secondly, he had consolidated the power of the Pharaohs, and secured to them an ample revenue wherewith they might effect important improvements in the agriculture of the country. For it seems that the system of artificial irrigation described upon the monuments, supplementing most beneficially the natural action of the river, dated from this epoch. That the people thankfully accepted these changes, and fully understood that but for Joseph's measures they would have perished, is clear from their own words : " Thou hast saved our lives : let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants." This willing acceptance of the Pharaoh as their king seems to imply a disaffection in previous years that must have been a source of continual danger to the country's peace. All this Joseph's wisdom effected ; and it had a yet further result, far more important to the world's destiny—it enabled him, under God's providence, to preserve the Chosen Family, in whose promised seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. J. P. N.

According to Herodotus, an ancient king had divided the whole land among the Egyptians, giving to each a square portion of equal excellence, and receiving from each a yearly rent in return. According to Diodorus, all the land in Egypt belonged either to the kings, or the priests, or the military caste. According to Strabo, the Egyptians, who were engaged in agriculture, held their land of the sovereign, and paid rent. According to the monuments, as we learn from Wilkinson, only kings, priests, and the military order were land-owners. All these profane authorities concur with holy writ in the main fact, viz. : that the cultivators were not the owners of the soil. On one point, indeed, there is an apparent disagreement. The Pentateuch limits the ownership of land to the kings and the priests ; Strabo extends it to the military order as well ; and herein his authority is confirmed by the sculptures. But Herodotus furnishes a key, whereby this apparent discrepancy can be reconciled. It is in the statement made by him, that the land of the soldiers differed from that of the peasants in being free of rent ; otherwise, he says, it belonged to the kings, and was given by them in fee to the soldiery. But there is still another point of disagreement between the Pentateuch and these profane authors. Moses asserts an original possession of the soil of Egypt by the cultivators, and a transfer of the title to the king under extraordinary circumstances ; Herodotus knows nothing of this, but represents the king as the original proprietor. Now this contradiction, so far from invalidating the credibility of the Pentateuch, serves rather to confirm it, since it presents in a strong light the superior knowledge of the author, which extends back to a period not even approached by the knowledge of profane writers. Here is an historical fact, stated by the Pentateuch, and vouched in the most ample manner by these writers, viz. : the possession by the king of all the land of Egypt not owned by the priests. E. C. W.

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If a man only wishes that his own conceptions of prosperity be realized, then let him keep his land in his own hand and work his material irrespective of God's demands ; for certainly if he yields himself to God, his own ideas of prosperity will not be realized. But if he suspects that God may have a more liberal conception of prosperity and may understand better than he what is eternally beneficial, let him commit himself and all his material of prosperity without doubting into God's hand, and let him greedily obey all God's precepts ; for in neglecting one of these, he so far neglects and misses what God would have him enter into. *Dods.*——Joseph showed the Egyptians that plenty and famine were themselves sent to cultivate self-discipline and providence in men. He used the experience of their wants and sufferings as a means of leading them to acquiesce in an arrangement which made them for the first time conscious that they were under a government which was caring for them, and watching over them ; a government not arbitrary, not seeking its own ends, but confessing obligations to its subjects, while it demanded obedience from them. He organized a community,—he made the king feel that he stood in an actual living relation to his subjects, and his subjects in an actual relation to him and to each other. Scripture represents this as a divine work, for which a man must have a divine vocation. *Maurice.*

# Section 76.

## ADOPTION AND BLESSING OF EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH.

GENESIS 47 : 27–31 ; 48 : 1–22.

47 : 27 AND Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen ; and they gat them pos-
28 sessions therein, and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the
land of Egypt seventeen years : so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were an hun-
29 dred forty and seven years. And the time drew near that Israel must die : and he called
his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray
thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me ; bury me not, I pray

30 thee, in Egypt : but when I sleep with my fathers, thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and
31 bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said,
Swear unto me : and he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.
48 : 1 And it came to pass after these things, that one said to Joseph, Behold, thy father is
2 sick : and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And one told Jacob,
and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee : and Israel strengthened himself, and
3 sat upon the bed. And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz
4 in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruit-
ful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a company of peoples ; and will give this
5 land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, which
were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine ;
6 Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine. And thy issue,
which thou begettest after them, shall be thine ; they shall be called after the name of
7 their brethren in their inheritance. And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel
died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when there was still some way to come
unto Ephrath : and I buried her there in the way to Ephrath (the same is Beth-lehem).
8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? And Joseph said unto his
9 father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me here. And he said, Bring them, I
10 pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so
that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him ; and he kissed them, and
11 embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face : and,
12 lo, God hath let me see thy seed also. And Joseph brought them out from between his
13 knees ; and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. And Joseph took them both,
Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward
14 Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right
hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon
15 Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly ; for Manasseh was the firstborn. And he
blessed Joseph, and said, The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk,
16 the God which hath fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which hath redeemed
me from all evil, bless the lads ; and let my name be named on them, and the name of
my fathers Abraham and Isaac ; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the
17 earth. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim,
it displeased him : and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head
18 unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father : for this is
19 the firstborn ; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I
know *it*, my son, I know *it* : he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great : how-
beit his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of
20 nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God
21 make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh : and he set Ephraim before Manasseh. And
Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die : but God shall be with you, and bring you again
22 unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy
brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

Observe the many incidents and suggestive topics presented in these 27 verses : Israel's settlement and great prosperity in Egypt ; Jacob's serene old age ; the approach of his time of departure ; his summons to Joseph in order that he might bind him by an oath to bury his remains in the burying-place of his fathers ; his sickness reported to Joseph ; Joseph's visit with his two sons to Jacob ; Jacob's recital of God's covenant with him at Bethel ; his adoption of Joseph's two sons as his own ; his touching reminiscence of Rachel's death and burial ; his notice of Joseph's sons and question respecting them, followed by his embrace and blessing of both ; the discriminate laying on of his hands, so that Ephraim the younger was placed before the elder, Manasseh ; the special gift to Joseph of the region around Shechem, the only land on earth of which he claimed the ownership ; and last, most beautiful and impressive of all, his threefold reference to the God of his fathers, who had fed and kept him life-long and delivered him from evil. Alike full of impressive facts and suggestive truths, these few verses do but emphasize the richness, breadth and helpfulness of this whole inspired History, and strongly commend its thoughtful continuous study. B.

**47 : 27, 28.** While the Egyptians were impoverished in their own land, Jacob was replenished in a strange land. He lived seventeen years after he came into Egypt, far beyond his own expectation ; seventeen years he had nourished Joseph (for so old he was when he was sold from him), and now, by way of requital, seventeen years Joseph nourished him. So that when he was old and least able to bear care and fatigue, he had least occasion for it, being well provided for by his son. H.——"And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt and had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years." Such is the brief statement which sketches for us the delightful picture of rest and enjoyment after the long years of trouble and sorrow. The intricate plot is at last unravelled ; and its tragic acts have evolved this beautiful scene of quiet rest to the chosen family, secure in their own settled homes and possessions, their own institutions of social order and worship. These last seventeen years of his life were enough to make him forget all the trouble of the former days of evil. He begins now to see the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham of the posterity innumerable as the stars of heaven. And his home is happy now, for his household is a loving household now. For we cannot imagine that the lessons of the scenes through which they have passed have been lost upon them. They have learned doubtless "not to fall out by the way." Joseph has taught them the lesson of love by showing them what true love is. This is to Jacob a blessed seventeen years, and to our human view it would seem the highest kindness of God to allow them to be prolonged indefinitely. Yet this is not Jacob's rest—"here is no continuing city," as we are all too apt to feel when God, in his providence, surrounds us so bountifully with these home joys. Just at the height of this enjoyment comes the announcement, "The time drew near when Israel must die." It is a representative picture which finds its counterpart more or less complete in every Christian community at this day. S. R.

**29.** Israel, as he is here again characteristically named, was preparing for another great act of faith. On his dying bed, he still held fast by the promises of God concerning the possession of Canaan, and all that was connected with it. (It is most instructive to notice in this history the frequent change of the names of *Jacob* and *Israel*.) A. E ——**30.** Jacob's desire that his body should be laid in Machpelah had a deeper root than nature. The land of Canaan was his by God's covenant. He was to die without entering on its possession ; but in his death he would show that he still believed that his children would have its ownership, and therefore he made Joseph swear that he would bury him in the sepulchre of his fathers. W. M. T.

The Apostle acquaints us with the secret of his injunction when he tells us (Heb. 11 : 22), that "by faith Jacob gave commandment concerning his bones." He believed the promise, that the land of Canaan should be given to him in the persons of his seed. By having his dead body conveyed to that land, he published to his seed and to the world that he believed and embraced the promise. *Bush.*

**31.** *And Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.* On receiving the solemn promise of Joseph, he turns toward the head of the bed, and assumes the posture of adoration, rendering thanks to God for all the mercies of his past life, and for this closing token of filial duty and affection. The Septuagint has the rendering "on the top of his staff," which is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is obtained by a mere change in the vowel pointing of the last word. M.——The Hebrew word without the vowel points means either "bed" or "staff." It is impossible to decide with certainty which was the original sense of the word. It is possible that the meaning is, as the Apostle quotes the passage, that after Joseph had sworn to bury him in Canaan, Jacob bowed himself upon the staff which had gone with him through all his wanderings, and so worshipped God. E. H. B.

**7.** There comes into the narrative here a touch of nature which is exceedingly affecting. He has been putting Ephraim and Manasseh into the birthright place forfeited by Reuben, because to them, as the sons of Joseph who was the firstborn of Rachel, after its forfeiture by the firstborn of Leah, it rightfully belonged ; and that suggests to him his first, his early, his constant, his supreme love for Rachel, so that he goes on to speak of her—of the time, place, and manner of her death, and of her lonely grave, precisely as if the incidents had happened only a short while before. It is *so* like an old man in the apparent abruptness of the transition from his grandsons to Rachel, and in the fond circumstantiality of his references to his well-beloved. W. M. T.

**14. Israel stretched out his right hand.** Laying hands on the head was always used among the Jews in giving blessings, designating men to any office, and in the conse-

cration of solemn sacrifices. This is the first time we find it mentioned ; but we often read of it afterward. But this preference has no concern with God's conferring a greater measure of his love and approbation on one person more than another ; for this we are assured can arise from nothing but men's moral characters ; it is the determination of truth that *with God* there is no respect of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him (Acts 10 : 34, 35). *Dodd.*

**The younger.** Grace observes not the order of nature, nor does God prefer those whom we think fittest to be preferred, but as it pleases him. It is observable, how often God, by the distinguishing favors of his covenant, advanced the younger above the elder ; Abel above Cain, Shem above Japheth, Abraham above Nahor and Haran, Isaac above Ishmael, Jacob above Esau ; Judah and Joseph were preferred before Reuben ; Moses before Aaron ; David and Solomon before their elder brethren. He tied the Jews to observe the birthright (Deut. 21 : 17), but he never tied himself to observe it. H.

There are providences of two sorts, seemingly good and seemingly bad ; and those do usually as Jacob did when he blessed the sons of Joseph, cross hands and lay the blessing where we would not. There are providences unto which we would have the blessings entailed ; but they are not. And there are providences that smile upon the flesh, such as cast into the lap health, wealth, plenty, ease, friends, and abundance of this world's good : but the great blessing is not in them. There are providences again, that take away from us whatever is desirable to the flesh ; such are sickness, losses, crosses, and affliction ; and usually in these, though they shock us whenever they come upon us, blessing coucheth and is ready to help us. For God, as the name of Ephraim signifies, makes us fruitful in the land of affliction. He therefore, in blessing his people, lays his hands across, guiding them wittingly and laying the chiefest blessing on the head of Ephraim, or in that providence that sanctifies affliction. He that has skill to judge of providences aright, has a great ability in him "to comprehend with other saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height ;" but he that has no skill as to discerning them, is but a child in his judgment in those high and mysterious things. *Bunyan.*

**15, 16.** "The God before whose face walked my fathers, Abraham and Isaac ; the God who pastured me from my existence on unto this day ; THE ANGEL who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads ; and let my name, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, be named upon them, and let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the land." In this threefold reference to God as the covenant God, the Shepherd and the Angel-Redeemer, we have a distinct anticipation of the truth concerning the blessed Trinity. A. E.

Observe the beautiful humility of Jacob. He does not speak about his own walking before God, but, "God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk." He knows that he himself has not walked very closely with God. **The God which fed me.** The word *fed* is scarcely wide enough to express the meaning. It means God who has *shepherded* me ; who has been my shepherd all my life long unto this day ; who has been guiding me and restoring me and controlling me, as well as feeding me. The faith of the patriarch is seen especially in his acknowledging God as his shepherd through all his wanderings, and through all his sorrows too. He has recognized at last that all these things have worked together for his good. *Gibson.*

**The Angel which redeemed me.** The Angel cannot be a created angel, but the Angel of God's presence ; the Messenger who spake with divine authority and as himself divine. *Alford.*——The God who fed him, and the Angel who redeemed him, are but one undivided object of his prayers. It is not putting undue stress upon Jacob's words to understand them as implying that Jacob was redeemed by this Angel from far worse evils than men had it in their power to inflict. He was redeemed from all his iniquities and from their consequences. The Angel-Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Saviour-Christ of the New, and who but he has been in every age the Redeemer of lost men? *Bush.*——It is impossible that the Angel thus identified with God can be a created Angel. Jacob alludes to the Angel who wrestled with him and whom he called God, the same as the Angel of the Covenant (Mal. 3 : 1). Luther observes that the verb "bless," which thus refers to the God of his fathers, to the God who had been his Shepherd, and to the Angel who redeemed him, is in the singular, not in the plural, showing that these three are but one God, and that the Angel is one with the fathers' God and with the God who fed Jacob like a sheep. E. H. B.

No thought now of his own schemes, his own efforts, his own successes. The preservation, the support, the provision all through life he

attributes alone to God—he the source of all his strength, he the blesser of all his efforts, he the giver of all that he has got or gained—the all-providing God. The incidents of the bygone life no longer spoken of as of old—as "things that had been against him"—no longer thought of as a series of perils, and trials, and bereavements ; but appearing now to the clear eye of faith as so many deliverances commanded and wrought out for him by that Angel of the covenant with whom he had that mysterious struggle at Peniel ; over whom, through weakness, he had power, and who not merely from the common ills of life—out of the hands of a Laban and an Esau had rescued him—but from all evil had delivered him—the redeeming God, whose goodness and mercy had followed him all the days of his life, and into whose provided house and home he had so soon to enter. Such was the aspect in which the dying Jacob looked at God. W. H.

**19. The fulness of the nations.** Such he became, when the tribe of Ephraim was the head of the northern kingdom of the ten tribes, representing them all ("the fulness of the nations") in itself. See the numerous allusions to Ephraim, as not only representing, but mainly constituting, the kingdom of the ten tribes. T. J. C.

**21.** And then, at the close, comes this simple and pathetic "Behold, I die," as short and calm as when, after a long interview, we take each other by the hand at parting, and say, We must away. "I die ; but God shall be with you." What a transition, but at the same time what a contrast ! *I* die ; but God ! The creature of a day, and the Eternal ; the child of dust, and the Father of spirits ; the departing friend, and the ever-remaining Guide, of whom Jacob at this moment has nothing more to ask for himself, but this alone to assure his successors : "He shall bring you again into the land of your fathers." *Van O.*——He left with him the promise of their return out of Egypt, as a sacred trust. Accordingly, Joseph, when he died, left it with his brethren (ch. 50 : 24). This assurance was given them and carefully preserved among them, that they might neither love Egypt too much when it favored them, nor fear it too much when it frowned upon them. These words of Jacob furnish us with comfort in reference to the death of our friends ; *they die.* But *God shall be with us,* and his gracious presence is sufficient to make up the loss. They leave us, but he will never fail us. He will *bring us to the land of our fathers, the heavenly Canaan,* whither our godly fathers are gone before us. If God be with us while we stay behind in this world, and will receive us shortly to be with them that are gone before to a better world, we ought not to sorrow as those that have no hope. H.

He died away from the Land of Promise, but he "greeted it from afar," and on his death-bed reaffirmed his faith that his children would possess it. "God will be with you ;" yes, and on the other side of it "he would be with God," in the true land of promise, the Canaan of the skies ; for that, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews assures us, was at the moment in his desire. But what was seen by him only through type becomes a direct object of faith to the Christian. Dying he leaves the Lord with his friends, and goes himself to be with the Lord. So he has calmness and peace. W. M. T.

**22. I have given to thee one portion.** There is little doubt but that this rendering is correct. The past tense is used by prophetic anticipation, and the meaning is, "I have assigned to thee one portion of that land, which my descendants are destined to take out of the hands of the Amorites." The word rendered portion is *Shechem,* meaning literally "a shoulder," thence probably a ridge or neck of land, hence here rendered by most versions and commentators "portion." Shechem, the city of Samaria, was probably named from the fact of its standing thus on a ridge or shoulder of ground. E. H. B.

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The accounts given in Scripture are the history, not so much of the intentions of man, as of the plans of God. Especially in the vernal sunshine of patriarchal days, we behold God's hand, we feel his presence, we admit his agency, at every turn. And all the way through the tangled web of Judaic history, it is Jehovah who is the planner, it is Jehovah who is the hero of the story. Well were it for each of us, if we could transfer this spirit of the Bible to the explanation of our own lives. It would clear up many a day of clouds, and solve many an enigma. J. W. A.

# Section 77.

## JACOB'S PROPHETIC BLESSING OF HIS SONS.

GENESIS 49 : 1–28.

1 AND Jacob called unto his sons, and said :
Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you
that which shall befall you in the latter days.
2 Assemble yourselves, and hear, ye sons of
Jacob ;
And hearken unto Israel your father.
3 Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might,
and the beginning of my strength ;
The excellency of dignity, and the excel-
lency of power.
4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not have the
excellency ;
Because thou wentest up to thy father's
bed :
Then defiledst thou it : he went up to my
couch.
5 Simeon and Levi are brethren ;
Weapons of violence are their swords.
6 O my soul, come not thou into their coun-
cil ;
Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou
united ;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their selfwill they houghed an ox.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ;
And their wrath, for it was cruel :
I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.
8 Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise :
Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine
enemies ;
Thy father's sons shall bow down before
thee.
9 Judah is a lion's whelp ;
From the prey, my son, thou art gone up :
He stooped down, he couched as a lion,
And as a lioness ; who shall rouse him up ?
10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh come ;
And unto him shall the obedience of the
peoples be.
11 Binding his foal unto the vine,
And his ass's colt unto the choice vine ;
He hath washed his garments in wine,
And his vesture in the blood of grapes :
12 His eyes shall be red with wine,
And his teeth white with milk.
13 Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the
sea :
And he shall be for an haven of ships ;
And his border shall be upon Zidon.
14 Issachar is a strong ass,
Couching down between the sheepfolds :
15 And he saw a resting place that it was good,
And the land that it was pleasant ;
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a servant under taskwork.
16 Dan shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17 Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
An adder in the path,
That biteth the horse's heels,
So that his rider falleth backward.
18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.
19 Gad, a troop shall press upon him :
But he shall press upon their heel.
20 Out of Asher his bread shall be fat,
And he shall yield royal dainties.
21 Naphtali is a hind let loose :
He giveth goodly words.
22 Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a fountain ;
His branches run over the wall.
23 The archers have sorely grieved him,
And shot at him, and persecuted him :
24 But his bow abode in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made
strong,
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
(From thence is the shepherd, the stone
of Israel,)
25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall
help thee,
And by the Almighty, who shall bless thee,
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath,
Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.
26 The blessings of thy father
Have prevailed above the blessings of my
progenitors
Unto the utmost bound of the everlasting
hills :
They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him that
was separate from his brethren.

27 Benjamin is a wolf that ravineth :
In the morning he shall devour the prey,
And at even he shall divide the spoil.

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel : and this is it that their father spake unto them and blessed them ; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

The death-scene was sublime. All the sons were summoned and stood round the bed. The time has arrived to give them all his last blessing. It comes in a series of flitting fragmentary visions, in which son after son, tribe after tribe, is presented ; the character of each son sketched, the after destiny of each tribe dimly and brokenly shadowed forth : not a set of distinct prophecies, as if Jacob had the particular events that were to happen actually before his eye, and was giving so many imaginative descriptions of them —still less a set of prophetic sketches contrived by some one long after the events had happened, and put into the lips of the dying seer. W. H.

The words were of mingled *blessing* and *prediction*. Before him, in prophetic vision, unrolled, as it were, pictures of the tribes of which his sons were to be the ancestors ; and what he saw he sketched in grand outlines. It is utterly impossible to regard these prophetic pictures as exact representations of any one definite period or even event in the history of Israel. They are sketches of the tribes in their grand characteristics, rather than predictions, either of special events, or of the history of Israel as a whole. And to them applies especially the description which one has given of prophetic visions generally, that "*they are pictures drawn without perspective*,"—that is, such that you cannot discern the distance from you of the various objects. A. E.——Before Jacob's mind are gathered in one living picture all the pleasing and painful events of which they have been the cause. With prophetic vision he traces the characters and dispositions of the fathers, as they are transmitted, expanded, or modified, through the history of their descendants. And aided by this insight, he allots to every one, on the authority of God, his fitting portion of that land in which he himself has led a pilgrim life for more than a hundred years, and which now stands with all its natural diversities and with its rich and manifold productions, as vividly and distinctly before his mind as the different characters of his own sons. K.

Looking back into the rude scenes of a very distant age, I see a man surrounded by a few camels and sheep, whose greatest boon was a well of spring-water or a pasture. This man knew very few moral rules, and did not always obey what he knew ; he had no Ten Commandments, no prophets, no Gospel,—yet I see that man turning with unspeakable awe to the One invisible ; longing, even unrighteously, for the spiritual birthright. In his distress I see him struggling as a wrestler with God the night through. As years go on I see him growing and rising in spiritual life, and at the end I see him, the most secular of the patriarchs, uplifted into such faith in God and into such visions as only faith can see, so that his lips break into the first prophetic song found in the Bible—every sentence filled with the finest insight, with a wonderful condensation of thought, of beauty and boldness of imagery, and all standing together as a series of great sculptures, in which the coming history of the Hebrew tribes is cut as in the everlasting rock. *Mercer.*

Jacob prophesies the destiny of each of his sons, and predicts, in still clearer terms, the advent of the Messiah. He is first represented in general terms, as "the seed of the woman." It is predicted that he shall descend from Shem. From among the sons of Shem, Abraham is selected : from the sons of Abraham, Isaac is chosen : of the two sons of Isaac, Jacob obtains the blessing : from the twelve sons of Jacob, Judah is announced as the ancestor of the Deliverer of man : and from all the numerous descendants of Judah, it is at length predicted that the Messiah shall spring from the line of David. By these gradual revelations the providence of God perpetually kept up the attention, and preserved the faith of man in the expected Mediator ; and the prophecy of Jacob was eminently useful to strengthen the faith of the Israelites in that gloomy season of bondage and distress, which began after the death of Joseph, and continued till the Exodus. G. T. ——The prophecy of Jacob sketches generally the fortunes of his family ; but all is leading up to that which was to be the great consummation, when the promised Seed should come and extend the blessings of the Spiritual Israel throughout all the world. It is to be carefully noted, that the occupation of Canaan by the twelve tribes under Joshua was not the point to which his expectations pointed as an end, but rather that from which his predictions took their beginning. The return to Canaan was a fact established in the decrees of Providence, the certainty of which rested on promises given and repeated to the Patriarchs. Jacob therefore does not repeat this, further than by the

injunction, in the previous chapter, and again at the end of this, that he should be buried, not in Egypt, but at Machpelah, the burying-place of his fathers. E. H. B.

**2.** Jacob and Israel both apply to the same person, and to the race of which he is the head. The one refers to the natural, the other to the spiritual. The distinction is similar to that between Elohim and Jehovah : the former of which designates the eternal God, antecedent to all creation, and therefore equally related to the whole universe ; the latter, the self-existent God, subsequent to the creation of intelligent beings, and specially related to them, as the moral Governor, the Keeper of covenant, and the Performer of promise. M.

**2–27.** The Spirit of God gives light and life to the germ of prophecy in Jacob's mind. First, he sees Reuben stand before him, full of strength and gentleness ; but by one act of sin and shame he has forfeited his birthright. His tribe receives but a small inheritance in the south eastern pastures, between the Jordan and Euphrates. This tribe plays an unimportant part in all the after history.—The fierce, undisciplined, fiery natures of Levi and Simeon come next into review. They receive now the punishment of their cruelty and treachery on Hamor and Sichem. As a tribe they could not dwell together. Their inheritance is divided and dispersed among the rest.—Next comes the kingly, haughty, and powerful Judah. He receives the birthright of sovereignty taken from Reuben. His tribe possessed invincible heroism, certainty of the future royal dignity, riches and abundance in their fruitful borders.—Zebulun seems to have had a disposition for business and commerce. It was to settle on the sea-shore, and stretch to Sidon.—Issachar is a powerful, but lazy, beast of burden. His dwelling suits his character. So that he can have peace, he is content with subjection.—Dan has an independent adventurous spirit, which spurs him on to bold and crafty deeds.—Gad allows himself to be attacked, but boldly turns and defeats the enemy. In his district, on the east of Jordan, this tribe was more exposed than most to continual assaults.—Asher is delicate, and prepares kingly dainties.—Naphtali is a slim hind, with eloquent beautiful language.—But all there is of outward blessing and riches is heaped on Joseph's house. Fruitful and powerful, he spreads himself on all sides. No assault can fall on him. In the fulness of his possessions he surpasses his brethren. In Benjamin, the youngest son of the beloved wife, is only to be seen a spirit of lawlessness and violence, which made this tribe dangerous, and brought upon it well-deserved humiliations. This " prophetic land-chart " of Canaan is very remarkable ; for, although Jacob is guided by the character of his sons in the description which he gives of their future lot, and by their past conduct, yet the Spirit of prophecy gives a width of meaning to his words, and the result turned out very differently from what might have been expected. *Gerlach.*

**3, 4.** Reuben, the firstborn, appears in many points not to have been by any means the worst of the brethren. He took no part in the deed of violence and treachery against the Shechemites ; he dissuaded his brethren from the murder of Joseph, and wished to restore him to his father ; he offered to become surety for the safety of Benjamin. But the dark spot of his life, and one which abode upon the mind of his father,—so that he disregarded his offered suretyship for Benjamin,—was his foul sin with Bilhah his father's concubine. *Alf.*——The prerogatives of the birthright consisted chiefly in a double portion of the father's estate ; the priesthood ; and the kingdom, that is, the chief authority among his brethren. The first of these was given to Joseph ; the second to Levi ; and the third to Judah, to descend to their respective tribes ; while the tribe of Reuben, who had forfeited his prerogative by his crime, recorded before by Moses and now alluded to by Jacob, was to continue in obscurity. *Bp. Patrick.*

In v. 4, the phrase, " Unstable as water," does not compare water to the solid earth or to more solid rock as treacherous to the foot and unsafe to stand on ; but rather as bubbling, effervescing under heat or applied force—as therefore a fit image of ungoverned passion ; of wantonness, impatient of restraint. Reuben had no moral stamina, and therefore could not hold his natural place of headship as the firstborn—a moral lesson worthy of thoughtful consideration. A young man given to licentious indulgence can have no solid bottom to his character. The sagacious will never trust him. H. C.——Reuben ought, as the firstborn, to have been the firmest defender of the honor of the family, and it was by him that it had been violated. For that reason the crown of dignity and might, to which his birthright entitled him, was taken from his head.

**5–7.** *Simeon* and *Levi* were the next in order, but the dignity, which Reuben had forfeited, could not be conferred upon them ; for through their treachery toward the Shechemites they had brought disgrace upon the house of Jacob. They had *united* for the purpose of crime, there-

fore they were to be *scattered* in Israel. The three elder sons were thus excluded from the rights and privileges of the birthright. They were not to inhabit the heart of the land, which would otherwise have fallen to their share. Reuben's inheritance was to be outside the true holy land, and therefore was not even mentioned. Simeon and Levi were to be scattered in fragments among the rest of the tribes, and therefore to lose the advantages and independence, which only compactness and unity could secure. K.——Jacob pronounces a curse upon their anger, not because indignation against sin is unwarrantable in itself, but because their wrath was marked by deeds of fierceness and cruelty. He does not cut them off from any part in the promised inheritance ; but he divides and scatters them. M ——Their fault was a bad union ; their punishment is a just division. Their fault was "hand-in-hand ;" they were too near ; their punishment is, they shall be set far enough asunder. So whom the devil hath joined God puts insunder, and a righteous thing it is it should be so. *Bp. Andrewes.*——The tribe of Simeon had not any inheritance properly of their own, but only a portion in the midst of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 19 : 1–9) ; whence several of them afterward went in quest of new habitations (1 Chron. 4 : 39, 42), and so were divided from the rest of their brethren. The tribe of Levi had no inheritance allotted to them, but were dispersed among all the tribes, having certain cities assigned to them, with a little land adjoining. This indeed did not prove a curse to them, they having the tenth of all the increase of the land : for this curse seems to have been taken off by reason of their eminent services in falling on the worshippers of the golden calf, and so consecrating themselves to the Lord (Exod. 32 : 26, 29) ; on which account Moses blesses this tribe a little before his death, whereas he gives no blessing to the tribe of Simeon, but leaves them under the curse here pronounced by Jacob. *Bp. Patrick.*

**8. Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise.** The rest of the nation shall be called *Jews*, and their whole country *Judea*, from Judah (Esther 3 : 6 ; Matt. 27 : 37). This tribe was famous also for their conquests over their enemies (Judg. 1 : 2), and the dominion which it enjoyed over their brethren. It was famous for the kingdom of the house of David ; but especially because the Messiah was born of this tribe, whose kingdom is everlasting. *Bp. Kidder.*

**On the neck of thine enemies.** The intrepid and successful bravery of the men of Judah was often the subject of admiration. As soon as the tribes of Israel sent forth separate armies against the Canaanites, the tribe of Judah gained a high distinction which was well maintained in succeeding generations. The fiercest giants about the region of Hebron could not stand before Caleb and his brave associates. David was of the tribe of Judah. By him was the kingdom of Israel raised to a pitch of power and glory which made his name great in distant lands. The enemies of Judah were more especially overthrown and brought into complete subjection under David, who, evidently referring to this prophecy, says (Ps. 18 : 40), "Thou hast also *given me the neck of mine enemies*, that I might destroy them that hate me."

——**Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee.** They shall acknowledge thee as exalted to the highest dignity among them. This prediction began to be accomplished when he took precedency of the other tribes in leading the armies of Israel, after the death of Joshua. It was also still more fully confirmed at a subsequent period (1 Chron. 5 : 2), "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler." But its complete accomplishment was to be realized only in Christ, in that transcendent dignity with which he is invested as King of kings and Lord of lords. Its ultimate spiritual fulfilment is to be seen symbolically represented in Rev. 5 : 5–8, where, when the Lion of the tribe of Judah takes the sealed book, the whole host of heavenly worshippers are discovered in prostrate adorations at his feet. *Bush.*

**9.** Literally : "A young lion is Judah ; from the prey, my son, art thou gone up : he kneels, he couches as a lion, and as a lioness, who shall rouse him up ?" Judah is a lion's whelp : he goes forth to the prey, he mounts up with his prey triumphantly to the mountain-den ; there he couches as a lion, nay, like the still fiercer lioness, who shall venture to rouse him ? In the description the imagery increases in force, perhaps in reference to the continually increasing power of this tribe, which received its consummation in the greatest of all Victors, in the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5 : 5). *Gerl.*

**10.** The meaning of the verse appears to be "The Sceptre (either of royal, or perhaps only of tribal, authority) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver (senator or scribe) from before him, until Shiloh (*i.e.* either 'the Prince of peace,' or 'he whose right it is') shall come, and to him shall the nations be obedient." There are some obscure expressions, but we may confidently hold that the above paraphrase

conveys the true sense of the passage. E. H. B. ——**Shall not depart from Judah.** Shall not pass from him to another, is the meaning. So general an expression should be taken in its obvious general import; namely, that Judah should retain the supremacy among the tribes of Israel, and should yield it to no other. This is verified in its history. For notwithstanding the revolt of the ten tribes, and the seventy years of captivity, it (and it alone) maintained its nationality to the coming of the Messiah, at which time it still had its own national institutions and laws. At the captivity, the nationality of the rival kingdom of the revolted tribes ceased, and was known no more: that of Judah continued to the coming of the Messiah, and soon after ceased forever. **Ruler's staff—between his feet.** As often represented in ancient sculptures. **Shiloh;** meaning, Peaceful, or Maker of peace. Compare Prince of peace, in Isaiah 9 : 6. That this refers to the Messiah, was held by the oldest Jewish interpreters, and there is no sufficient ground for dissenting from their opinion. **To him;** referring either to the nearest subject, Shiloh, the most obvious grammatical reference, or to Judah the leading subject of the sentence. In the former case, the word *peoples* is to be taken in its widest sense. In the latter, it has its more usual meaning, namely the tribes of Israel; and the reference is to the most brilliant period of Judah's supremacy, when all were united under the sway of David and Solomon. T. J. C.——Far more probable is the rendering which makes Shiloh a proper name, and the subject of the verb, signifying "Peace," or rather, "the Peacemaker," the "Prince of peace." So, with slight variations, Luther, Vater, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Hengstenberg, Knobel, Keil and others of the highest authority. The title is one most appropriate to Messiah (see Isai. 9 : 6). The word is legitimately formed from the verb *Shalah*, to rest, to be at peace; and if the received reading be the true reading, there need be little doubt that this is its meaning. E. H. B.

This victorious tribe shall maintain its pre-eminence above the rest until the Prince of Peace shall come, to whom, not only the other tribes, but all people, shall yield obedience. The triumph which all nations shall enjoy in Abraham and his seed is to consist in peace, which the mighty, victorious Leader shall give to them. The "Prince of Peace," as says Isaiah, carrying out this image, shall erect a kingdom in which peace shall have no end. *Gerl.*——This distinctive feature of the Messiah's character and mission is the theme of Ps. 72 and of many passages in Isaiah, *e.g.* 9 : 6, 7, and 11 : 1–10, and 60 : 18–22. These prophecies naturally follow the lead of this and therefore sustain the construction here given it. Moreover, it is natural and highly probable that Jacob, whose twelve sons were to found the twelve tribes of Israel and who knew that the Messiah was to come in the line of *some one* of his sons, should indicate which. Noah had designated Shem: God had designated Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; now the choice is naturally made out of these twelve. H. C.

As regards the fulfilment of this prophecy, it is undoubted that the tribal authority and the highest place in the nation continued with Judah until the destruction of Jerusalem. Israel never ceased to be a nation, Judah never ceased to be a tribe with at least a tribal sceptre and lawgivers, or expositors of the law, Sanhedrim or Senators, and with a general pre-eminence in the land, nor was there a foreign ruler of the people, till at least the time of Herod the Great, just before the birth of the Saviour. E. H. B.——We learn from history that Judah *never lost his tribe*, the greatest care having been exercised to preserve distinct this tribe and its families. Thus, in the days of Saul the men of Judah were numbered *apart* (1 Sam. 11 : 8); the same also was the case in the time of David (2 Sam. 24 : 9). Prophets also were employed to record the genealogies of this tribe under the kings (2 Chron. 12 : 15, and 13 : 22), and the same care appears to have been exercised during the captivity in Babylon, for while there was difficulty in making out the genealogies of some of the other tribes there was none in regard to this (Ez. 2 : 62; Neh. 7 : 64). And while in fact a portion of the other ten tribes never returned at all to the land of their fathers, Judah, with Benjamin its accessory, returned with its integrity unbroken, and so remained till the birth of Christ, the whole nation as well as the land itself receiving its denomination from Judah, the one being called "Jews," the other "Judea." Thus it was that the sceptre, or the *tribal constitution*, did not depart from Judah before the predicted era. It is abundantly evident, however, that both the *sceptre* and what is called the *lawgiver* are long since lost in Judah; that the tribe of Judah has lost the record of its genealogies; and that none can discriminate the true descendants of the patriarch Judah from the descendants of Benjamin or of the other patriarchs. Either then this word of promise to Judah has failed for-

evermore, or Shiloh is come, and it is vain to look for another Messiah. *Bush.*

The second king of Israel was of the tribe of Judah ; and from that time to the Babylonish captivity Judah had not only the sceptre of a tribe, but the sceptre of a kingdom. When it was promised that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, it was implied that it should depart from the other tribes : accordingly the tribe of Benjamin became an appendage to the kingdom of Judah, and the other ten tribes were carried into Assyria, whence [as tribes] they never returned. The Jews also were carried captive to Babylon, but returned after seventy years. During their captivity they had lived as a distinct people ; had rulers and governors of their own ; and a "prince of Judah" (Ez. 1 : 8). These princes and rulers managed their return and settlement afterward. After the Babylonish captivity they lived under the dominion of the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, not so free as before ; but still as a distinct people under their own laws. The authority of their rulers and governors subsisted under these foreign masters ; afterward under the Asmonean princes ; and even in our Saviour's time. Their power indeed in capital causes, especially those relating to the state, was abridged. The sceptre was then departing ; and in about forty years it totally departed. Their city was taken ; their temple was destroyed ; and they themselves were either slain with the sword, or sold for slaves. And from that time to this, they have never formed one body or society, but have been dispersed among all nations ; their tribes and genealogies have been all confounded ; and they have lived without a ruler, without a lawgiver, and without supreme authority and government in any part of the earth. And this a captivity not for seventy years, but for seventeen hundred.——**Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.** That is, of the Gentiles. This is foretold in many other Scriptures. It began to be fulfilled in Cornelius the centurion, and in a few years the Gospel was disseminated in the most considerable parts of the then known world. We ourselves were of the Gentiles, but are now *gathered* unto Christ. *Bp. Newton.*

We now see the excellency of the blessing given to Judah. He was to be the father of the Shiloh ; and till the Shiloh came, this tribe was to be the most glorious of all the tribes of Israel. The great burden of Judah's blessing was the promise of the Messiah. *Bush* ——He is *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*, who having spoiled principalities and powers went up a Conqueror, and couched so as none can stir him up when he sat down on the right hand of the Father. To him belongs the sceptre ; *to him shall the gathering of the people be*, as the Desire of all nations (Hag. 2 : 7), who being lifted up from the earth should draw all men unto him, and in whom the children of God that are scattered abroad should meet, as the centre of their unity. H.

**11, 12.** The image of Judah, given in antique poetic speech, is in the highest degree picturesque. We see him binding his beast to the vine, which is the blessing of his land. The choice red sap flows for him in such abundance that he has washed his garments in it, which therefore show the royal purple. We only need look at him to see the profuse abundance yielded by his land. The dark fire peculiar to wine streams from his eyes, the dazzling white of milk from his teeth ; so that we see with what his land overflows. As the land designed for him brings forth the noblest and richest fruit, the royal vine, so he himself is comparable in lofty energy to the royal lion, and as such he will bear the sceptre. Here plainly two stages are distinguished in Judah's future, a stage of conflict and one of peace. In the conflict for the attainment of his high destiny he will be the resistless conqueror, in peace the ruler unsurpassed in glory. History has brought the *fulfilment*. Not only was Judah in the van on the desert-march, not only was he the unwearied champion in the conquest of the land, but in other ways he showed his lion-like superiority. The age of greatest triumph and glory was ushered in by David when he assumed the sceptre and staff, no more to depart from his house. And under Solomon, the calmly couching lion, followed the most peaceful epoch of abundant prosperity, as under a true Prince of Peace. This was the climax of Israelitish national life. But the ideal was not reached then, still less afterward. On this account prophecy speaks again and again of a new setting up of the tabernacle of David (Amos 9 : 11), of a future David to whom it belongs to administer the law (Ezek. 34 : 23), who will subjugate all nations and bring in eternal peace. This king will enter Zion riding on the animal of peace (Zech. 9 : 9) ; under him men will enjoy the abundance of the land undisturbed (Joel 4 : 18 ; Micah 4 : 4). The final fulfilment of this patriarchal blessing we can only find with the apostolic Church *in Christ*, who has overcome as "the lion of the tribe of Judah," and now extends his kingdom in undisturbed peace, and rejoices in its glory. *Orelli.*

The whole description here is full of Messi-

anic allusions, which were afterward taken up in the prophecy of Balaam ; then applied to David (Ps. 89) ; and from him carried forward in prophecy, through Ps. 72, Isa. 9 : 11, to Ezek. 21 : 27, and Zech. 9 : 9, till they were finally realized in Jesus Christ, "sprung out of Juda," "our peace, who hath made both one," and who "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet," "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David," who "hath prevailed." A. E. ——Through the Old Testament Scriptures we find the conception of a kingdom to be set up in the latter days held forth continually both as the hope of Israel, and as the consummation of God's purposes of grace for mankind. We go back to that primitive scene of the patriarch of the twelve tribes, dying in a strange land, his sons gathered around him as he braces himself upon the edge of his couch, and leans upon the top of his staff and worships the God before whom his fathers "Abraham and Isaac did walk," and as his dimmed eyes brighten with the vision of the future, we hear him say, with the confidence of a Seer to whom that vision is reality,—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh—the Peace shall come ; and unto him shall the obedience of the Peoples be." Hardly is David seated upon his throne in Judah, and the ark that had rested in Shiloh brought up to Zion, when, as if to disclaim the fulfilment of Jacob's prediction in himself, the Psalmist prophesied anew the coming of the Lord's anointed, who should have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Ps. 2).

But though Judah in the time of her prosperity must still wait for the consummation of her kingdom, yet in her times of depression and fear the promise is renewed to revive her hope. Isaiah then lifts up his voice like a trumpet, rallying the discomfited and despairing people : "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (Isa. 9 : 6, 7). And Zechariah, making the hills of Palestine vocal with the welcome to Messiah, sings, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion : shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold thy king cometh unto Thee" (Zech. 9 : 9) ; and Micah reaches forth the prophetic benediction to Bethlehem—"Though least among the thousands of Judah, yet out of her shall he come forth that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5 : 2).

And all the history of the ages is brought to crystallize about this single thread of the promised kingdom of the Messiah. It is wonderful with what tenacity of assertion the Bible holds to this conception of the kingdom of God ; it is amazing with what majesty of purpose, what stateliness of march the Providence of God moves ever toward the consummation of that kingdom in the coming of Christ. Men, kings, peoples, dynasties, empires, as brought within the contemplation of this Book, are nothing, save as they touch upon this kingdom, and are the agents or opponents of its progress. Egypt, Arabia and Tyre, Assyria, Babylon and Persia, the later Macedonian and Roman empires—all are of no account save as they help or hinder the unfolding of the kingdom of God. The covenant with Abraham *posited* that kingdom in the oath of Jehovah as the guarantee of its universality and its perpetuity ; the constitution of Israel under a Theocracy erected before the world a symbol of this divine kingdom, and provided within itself the means of its spiritual development : and when the fulness of time had arrived for the spiritual to burst its shell and stand forth in the beauty of Righteousness, the majesty of Truth, the power of Love, then the polity like the ritual fell away, and symbol, prophecy, and history met and were fulfilled in Christ. J. P. T.

**13.** The lot of God's providence exactly agrees with the plan of God's counsel, like a true copy with the original. If prophecy says, *Zebulun shall be a haven of ships*, Providence will so plant him. God appoints the bounds of our habitation. It is our wisdom and duty to accommodate ourselves to our lot, and to improve it. If Zebulun dwell at the haven of the sea, let him be for a haven of ships. H.

**14, 15.** The principal portion of the great plain of Esdraelon fell to the lot of the tribe of *Issachar*. And for the sake of securing himself in so desirable a portion, Issachar appears to have become at times humbly subservient to the Canaanites of the adjacent fortified towns, and to the proud country of Phœnicia on the near sea-coast. The people of Issachar—in the language of Ritter—"assumed a position of almost slavish servitude in relation to the Phœnicians, becoming their common carriers, muledrivers, and servants of all work." Such humiliation of this tribe the dying Jacob must

have foreseen, when he spake this of Issachar. N. C. B.

**16, 17. Dan.** We have only to consult the history of Samson's warfare with the Philistines to see how strikingly this predicted character was then realized. *Bush.*——**18.** That the long-promised Seed was in Jacob's thought is forcibly and beautifully suggested in the midst of these dying benedictions by the words—"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." In the sustaining hope of a coming Saviour he had waited and trusted through many long years; for these words express the precious experiences of a life. As Jesus himself testified of Abraham, "He rejoiced to see my day," hailing it joyously from afar, so Jacob witnesses of himself, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." H. C.——Nothing can be more natural than to suppose that the dying patriarch, at the moment when he was formally transmitting to his children the theocratic blessing, had his thoughts lifted up toward that great salvation, of which all these material and temporal benedictions pronounced upon his sons were but the shadows and the types, and of which perhaps he had been incidentally reminded by the mention of the biting serpent, to which he had just likened Dan. It is noticeable that this is the first occurrence of the term salvation. T. W.

The salvation he waited for was *Christ*, the promised Seed, whom he had spoken of (v. 10). Now that he was going to be gathered to his people, he breathes after him to whom the gathering of the people shall be. Now that he is going to enjoy the salvation, he comforts himself with this, that he had waited for the salvation. It is the comfort of a dying saint thus to have waited for the salvation of the Lord; for then he shall have what he has been waiting for: long-looked-for will come. H.——Our Lord appears as the chief, the central object of prophecy; the light that illuminates its obscurity. Even in the early period of the patriarchs, he was the principal object of desiring expectation to holy men. All the ancient saints were waiting for him, down to Simeon, who could depart in peace, because his eyes had seen the Saviour. *R. Hall.*

**19. Gad.** The language refers to attacks of nomadic tribes which would harass and annoy the Gadites, but which they would successfully repel. **20. Asher.** The import of the blessing is that Asher should possess a specially productive soil. *Whitelaw.*

**22–26.** There is here a fulness of paternal feeling, a richness and prodigality of blessing, such as would naturally be poured forth on the lost and recovered child of the object of early love, and child of old age. These natural affections, under divine guidance, often become, as here, the fittest instruments for the expression of the divine will. T. J. C.——The blessing on JOSEPH forms the climax of the father's fondness and the prophet's fervor. Taking his name (*adding* or *increase*) as a sign both of his past abundance and his future enlargement, he compares him to a fruitful vine, or rather a branch of the vine of Israel, throwing its shoots over the wall of the cistern by which it is planted; and he promises his favorite son every form of blessing that man could desire or enjoy. As in all his history, so in this prophecy especially, Joseph is one of the most eminent types of Christ. P. S.

**22. A fruitful bough.** Joseph is fitly compared to a fruitful bough by reason of his numerous offspring. He was the head of two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, and they were both very numerous. **23.** Joseph was aimed and shot at and greatly oppressed by his enemies. His own brethren reviled him, shooting at him with the *arrows* of bitter words: they contrived his death. He was sold into Egypt through envy, and imprisoned by a lie. **24. But his bow abode in strength.** The Divine help and mercy did not forsake him: he was preserved and relieved by the mighty God of Israel. By him he was kept alive, when his death was designed; preserved chaste, when he was greatly tempted; rendered prosperous in his lowest circumstances; and from them advanced to great dignity, and made an instrument of very great good to others. *From thence*, that is, from the same Divine power and mercy, Joseph, who had been sold, tempted, maligned, and imprisoned, and greatly oppressed, became the *feeder*, and *stay* and *support* (called here *stone*, compare Gen. 28 : 11), or *rock of defence* of his father and his family. "Neither was there a man born like unto Joseph, a governor of his brethren, a stay of the people" (Ecclus. 49 : 15). *Bp. Kidder.*

**25, 26.** These two thoughts—the peaceful abundance of his old age, which he owed to Joseph, and the persecutions his beloved son had endured—stir the fountains of his affections until they overflow with blessings. *Blessings of heaven above*,—the air, the rain, and the sun. *Blessings of the deep*,—the springs and streams, as well as the fertile soil. *Blessings of the breasts and the womb*,—the children of the home and the young of the flocks and herds. The benedictions pronounced upon Joseph exceed those that came upon Jacob himself from

his fathers. To Joseph is given a double portion, with a double measure of affection from a father's heart. M.

**27. Benjamin.** As Judah is likened to a lion, Issachar to a strong ass, Dan to a serpent, Naphtali to an hind let loose, Joseph to a fruitful bough, or tree planted by the waters ; so Benjamin is fitly compared to a ravenous wolf, for his warlike courage and success against his enemies. *Kidder.*——It was a fierce and warlike tribe, as appears from several instances, and especially in the case of the Levite's wife (Judg. 20), when they alone waged war against all the other tribes, and overcame them in two battles. **In the morning.** The *morning* and *night* here are the morning and night of the Jewish state, which is the subject of all Jacob's prophecy : as in Moses's prophecy, which is an exposition of this of Jacob, "Benjamin shall dwell in safety ; the Lord shall cover him all the day long." This imports that Benjamin should continue longer than the other tribes, even to the very last times of the Jewish state. And this was most exactly fulfilled. As the tribe of Benjamin annexed itself to the tribe of Judah as its head, so it ran the same fortune with it : they went together into captivity ; they returned home together ; and were both in being when Shiloh came. *Bp. Newton.*

**28, 29.** The concluding words (v. 29) show that this was a formal appointment of Jacob's twelve sons to be the twelve heads of the chosen race, now becoming a nation, instead of its having one head as hitherto ; and also that the blessings and prophecies of the dying patriarch had respect rather to the tribes than to their individual ancestors ; and henceforth the tribes are continually spoken of as if they were persons. P. S.

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The Jews, without reference to their religious belief, are among the most remarkable people in the annals of mankind. Sprung from one stock, they pass the infancy of their nation in a state of servitude in a foreign country, where, nevertheless, they increase so rapidly, as to appear on a sudden the fierce and irresistible conquerors of their native valleys in Palestine. There they settle down under a form of government and code of laws totally unlike those of any other rude or civilized community. They sustain a long and doubtful conflict, sometimes enslaved, sometimes victorious, with the neighboring tribes. At length, united under one monarchy, they gradually rise to the rank of a powerful, opulent, and commercial people. Subsequently weakened by internal discord, they are overwhelmed by the vast monarchies which arose on the banks of the Euphrates, and transplanted into a foreign region. They are partially restored, by the generosity or policy of the Eastern sovereigns, to their native land. They are engaged in wars of the most romantic gallantry, in assertion of their independence, against the Syro Grecian successors of Alexander. Under Herod, they rise to a second era of splendor, as a dependent kingdom of Rome : finally, they make the last desperate resistance to the universal dominion of the Cæsars. Scattered from that period over the face of the earth —hated, scorned, and oppressed, they subsist, a numerous and often a thriving people ; and in all the changes of manners and opinions retain their ancient institutions, their national character, and their indelible hope of restoration to grandeur and happiness in their native land. Thus the history of this, perhaps the only unmingled race, which can boast of high antiquity, leads us through every gradation of society, and brings us into contact with almost every nation which commands our interest in the ancient world ; the migratory pastoral population of Asia ; Egypt, the mysterious parent of arts, science, and legislation ; the Arabian Desert ; the Hebrew theocracy under the form of a federative agricultural republic, their kingdom powerful in war and splendid in peace ; Babylon, in its magnificence and downfall ; Grecian arts and luxury endeavoring to force an unnatural refinement within the pale of the rigid Mosaic institutions ; Roman arms waging an exterminating war with the independence even of the smallest states ; it descends, at length, to all the changes in the social state of the modern European and Asiatic nations.

The religious history of this people is no less singular. In the narrow slip of land inhabited by their tribes the worship of one Almighty Creator of the Universe subsisted, as in its only sanctuary. In every stage of society, under the pastoral tent of Abraham, and in the sumptuous temple of Solomon, the same creed maintains its inviolable simplicity. During their long intercourse with foreign nations in Egypt and Babylon, though the primitive habits and character of the Hebrew nation were greatly modified, and perhaps some theological notions engrafted on their original tenets, this primary distinction still remains ; after several periods of almost total apostasy, it revives in all its vigor. Nor is this merely a sublime speculative tenet, it is the basis of their civil constitution, and their national character. As there is but one Almighty God, so there is but one people

under his especial protection, the descendants of Abraham. Hence their civil and religious history is inseparable. The God of the chosen people is their temporal as well as spiritual sovereign ; he is not merely their legislator, but also the administrator of their laws. Their land is his gift, held from him, as from a feudal liege-lord, on certain conditions. He is their leader in war, their counsellor in peace. Their happiness or adversity, national as well as individual, depends solely and immediately on their maintenance or neglect of the divine institutions. Such was the common popular religion of the Jews, as it appears in all their records, in their law, their history, their poetry, and their moral philosophy. Hence, to the mere speculative inquirer, the study of the human race presents no phenomenon so singular as the character of this extraordinary people ; to the Christian, no chapter in the history of mankind can be more instructive or important than that which contains the rise, progress, and downfall of his religious ancestors. *Milman.*

# Section 78.

## DEATH AND FUNERAL OF JACOB.

GENESIS 49 : 29–33 ; 50 : 1–13.

49 : 29 AND he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people : bury
30 me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that
is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abra-
ham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace :
31 there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his
32 wife ; and there I buried Leah : the field and the cave that is therein, which was pur-
33 chased from the children of Heth. And when Jacob made an end of charging his sons, he
gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his
people.

50 : 1 And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And
2 Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father : and the physicians
3 embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him ; for so are fulfilled the days of
embalming : and the Egyptians wept for him threescore and ten days.
4 And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spake unto the house of
Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of
5 Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die : in my grave which I have
digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go
6 up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, Go up,
7 and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear. And Joseph went up to bury his
father : and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and
8 all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his
father's house : only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the
9 land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen : and it was a
10 very great company. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond
Jordan, and there they lamented with a very great and sore lamentation : and he made a
11 mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaan-
ites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the
Egyptians : wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan.
12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them : for his sons carried him
13 into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which
Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a buryingplace, of Ephron the Hittite,
before Mamre.

The life of Jacob is a most striking illustration of the difficult sort of natural material which the grace of God often has to work upon. Jacob was not by nature a noble character. But the grace of God made him noble in the hour of trial. Of all men, Jacob might have

applied himself to the language of the great apostle two thousand years after: "By the grace of God I am what I am." Hence, next to David's life, this checkered, troubled life of Jacob is the most instructive on the subject of Christian experience of any of the biographies of holy scripture. Nor is there a place of spiritual history into which sin and sorrow can cast the believing soul which may not directly or indirectly find its illustration in the story of Jacob's experience. This account of the last hours and the death of such a man is beautifully presented here. When "the time drew near that Israel must die," as we have already seen, he at once proceeded with the greatest self-possession to set his house in order. He has now announced the prophetic oracles concerning his posterity in the "afterhood of days," and has given solemn charge to lay his dead body with Abraham and Sarah and Isaac, in the land of the inheritance. And his work being all done, he lies down to await his last summons. Calmly he yielded up his spirit to Him who gave it, and is "gathered to his fathers." S. R.

**29–32.** Abraham had testified his faith in the divine promises by the purchase of the burying-place of Machpelah, and Jacob would show that he had the same confidence. His command to his sons was a public profession that he had lived and was now dying in the same faith by which his progenitors had embraced the promise. What was said by Paul of Joseph may be said of Jacob, that "by faith he gave commandment concerning his bones." *Bush.*

**33.** Jacob is the only one of the Old Testament patriarchs whom we are able to accompany to his very last hour. And here we see how the Old Testament death-bed was surrounded by brightness and peace, the fear of death being swallowed up in the certain hope of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. *Baum.*——He rather appears to have *conquered* death than to have *suffered* it. Who, seeing the end of this illustrious patriarch, can help exclaiming, There is none like the God of Jeshurun! Let Jacob's God be my God! Let *me* die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! A. C.——Death was no new subject to him; salvation not an untried theme; the grave no strange country; heaven not an unlooked-for home. He had waited for the Angel of the Covenant, who had redeemed him from all evil, and the summons, when it came, found him ready and willing to enter into the eternal presence. His work was done; his last blessings and behests had been pronounced; his last accents of prayer and praise breathed out; and he had now nothing to do but "to gather up his feet into his bed," and cheerfully to resign his spirit into the hand of his Father and his God. He was gathered to his people according to his own expectation and his hope. *Bush.*

Here is more than quiet hope, here is full certainty of salvation: here is a waiting, an expectation which can afford to be patient because it is certain, and can in no case be mistaken. No remorse for the past disturbs him; the sinner has become the favored of God, the heir of the promise. No fear of the future concerns him; assured of God's salvation, his soul is thus set free from everything that might even at the last trouble his peace, and it surrenders all unconditionally with the words, "Lo, I die, but God shall be with you,' and he falls asleep like a child on the faithful bosom of its mother. Glorious fruits of the hope of salvation in the glimmering twilight of the ancient covenant! If *they* could thus depart who have not seen the promises fulfilled, but merely beholding them from afar have believed and embraced them, what should be the life, what at last the death, of those who walk at noonday, and rejoice in an accomplished salvation! *Van O.*

His yielding up the ghost and being gathered unto his people –as if these two events were in close juxtaposition—and the latter previous to the funeral which took place many days after—indicate another sort of gathering with his ancestors than merely being buried with them; as if his spirit in returning to God joined Abraham and Isaac—standing before him who is the God, not of the dead but of the living. T. C.

"Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." This declaration of Christ, while it anticipates the vocation of the Gentiles as fellow-heirs with Israel of spiritual and celestial blessings, refers us in its full and final accomplishment to the grand eternal assembly of the redeemed: it points the eye of faith and hope to a prospect before which all others fade into littleness and darkness. What a multitude must that be which embraces the saved of all ages, from the beginning to the end of time! "a multitude," indeed, "which none can number;" innumerable as the leaves of autumn which moulder into earth, types of the buried bodies of the saints; innumerable as the leaves of spring which reappear in vernal beauty, types of those bodies destined to reappear in the beauty of the

resurrection. Every dispensation, Patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian, will meet and mingle there. And not those only who walked with God in the shadowy moonlight of Judaism, and those who followed Christ in the bright sunshine of the gospel ; but those also who "felt after their Maker, if happily they might find him," in the glimmering gloom of natural reason, may swell that immense host of the redeemed. Let us be followers of those who through faith and patience now inherit the promises ; followers of those devout patriarchs who sought a better country ; children of Abraham, Israelites indeed ! *R. Hall.*

**50 : 1.** In full accordance with the promise made to Jacob by Jehovah at Beersheba, Joseph is present to close his eyes, and that done the great Egyptian prince gives vent to his uncontrollable sorrow. It is a beautiful exhibition of nature asserting her rights in spite of all official grandeur and etiquette. Joseph the man, the son, is above Joseph the prince. In all the glories of his exaltation he is not ashamed of his connection, by birth and sympathy, with this tribe of shepherds from Canaan. He sees by faith, as Moses did afterward, that it is better to be Jacob's son than prince of the Empire of Egypt. S. R.

**2-4. Embalmed Israel.** Great numbers of embalmed bodies ("mummies") have been found in Egyptian tombs within the present century, in perfect preservation. On this point the coincidences between sacred and profane history are striking. The practice was very ancient, some mummies bearing the date of the oldest kings. It was performed by a special class of physicians. In harmony with Moses, Herodotus and Diodorus state that the embalming process occupied forty days ; the entire period of mourning seventy. Classic authorities give accounts similar to this of great mourning for the dead. The monuments contain representations to the same effect. Funeral trains and processions are represented abundantly in the oldest tombs at Elithias, also at Sagguarah, at Gizeh, and at Thebes. A coincidence so minute as this is noticed ; that mourners forbore to shave their hair or beard ; but none might appear before the king unshorn. Consequently we observe that Joseph does not come before the king in person but "spake unto the house of Pharaoh" requesting them to speak in his behalf to the king. H. C.

**7-13.** Of the funerals of the kings of Judah usually no more is said than this, *They were buried with their fathers in the city of David ;* but the funeral of the patriarch Jacob is more largely and fully described. He had spoken more than once of dying for grief and going to the grave bereaved of his children, but he dies in honor, and is followed to the grave by all his children. His orders concerning his burial were given and observed in faith, and in expectation both of the earthly and of the heavenly Canaan. H.——**9. A very great company.** This must have been a very grand funeral procession—and that for more than two hundred miles—such as the world has seldom seen. There were not only the family of Israel —and not only the officers of the court, "the servants of Pharaoh"—but "the elders of Egypt," or the grandees of the empire. There were also chariots and horsemen, so that, with the attendants taken with them by so many high persons, the camp was very great, as the text states. *Kit.*——The splendor and magnificence of our Patriarch's funeral seem to be without a parallel in history. The noble obsequies of Marcellus come nearest in comparison. But how do even these fall short of the simple narrative before us ! For what are the six hundred beds, for which the Roman solemnities on this occasion were so famous, when compared to that *national itinerant* multitude which swelled like a flood and moved like a river ; to "all Pharaoh's servants, to the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt," that is, to the officers of his household, and deputies of his provinces ; with "all the house" of Joseph, and his "brethren," and his "father's house," conducting their solemn sorrow for two hundred miles into a distant country ? *Stackhouse.*

**10. Atad, beyond Jordan.** The vast cavalcade which left Egypt with the corpse of Jacob did not move directly by the shortest route to Canaan, but around on the eastern side of the Dead Sea to the Jordan. This was probably to avoid collision with the people of the thickly-settled country of South Canaan, or from unfriendly relations between Egypt and that region.

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*Scriptural meaning and use of the term "Elder."* It is worthy of special note that in this enumeration of the great personages that attended the funeral we have mentioned "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt." The first mention we have of the "elder," as a title of office, is in the case of Eliezer, the servant and elder of Abraham's house in Gen. 24 : 2. It is obvious, from that place and this, that the title denoted from the first a ministerial agency, and therefore the term *servant* connected with it de-

noted nothing servile, but simply that the office was ministerial and under the direction of a higher authority. This is precisely the use made of the term in the New Testament. The apostles denominated themselves "stewards," or upper servants of the Church of God. It is a very striking illustration of the perpetuity of usage in certain terms as conveying the same general ideas from age to age. Why should the name "elder" have been given to ministerial agents, whether civil or religious? Doubtless from the first form of government on earth—the patriarchy—the government of the "old man" of the tribe. So long as human life extended to near a thousand years there could be no other government either in state or church than that of the family. The list of patriarchs from Adam to Abraham is doubtless a list of the succession of ruling heads over the people "that called on the name of Jehovah." When human life was shortened to a little more than a century this system of *natural* rulers or elders must, in the nature of the case, give way to the system of *chosen* rulers from among several of the same age. The term "elder" was transferred from the patriarchs to the *appointed* rulers, and hence, both in state and church, we find the *Zakan* (Hebrew), *Presbuteros* (Greek), elder (English) applied, as here, to the public ministers of Egypt, and subsequently to the magistrates of Moab and to both the civil and ecclesiastical rulers in Israel. The same idea of naming the officer from a term denoting *age* has run through all history since. Thus the Greek councillors were "Patres" (fathers), the Roman Senators (from *Senex*, an old man), and from the Latin was derived the Spanish *Signor* and the French *Seigneur*. Then the German "*Alderman*," or older man, the same which we still apply to the councillors of a city. In the church of God that has continued to be the term properly denoting rule and ministerial authority in every age, through both the Old and New Testament. For, while other terms are applied to the ministers of religion in the New Testament, it will be found that they are used only incidentally. The term "*Apostle*," as describing men "sent" out by Christ as his witnesses—the term "*episcopos*"—occuring only half a dozen times, and always in speaking to Greeks—is manifestly only a Greek explanation of the old ecclesiastical term "Presbyter"—"elder," which Greeks had not yet grown familiar with. "Presbyter" is the fundamental title of office in the church throughout the history; and so in the prophetic visions of the church of the future as the Apostle John saw it in the Apocalypse, it still continues under the same organization. For he saw "*four-and-twenty elders*"—twelve representatives of the Old Testament church and twelve of the New—leading on the redeemed church, and casting their crowns at the feet of the Lamb, that sat upon the throne. It is a singular fact that on the monuments of Egypt the same peculiarity of "elder" as the name for a nobleman is found. The symbol in hieroglyphics, denoting a head man, or noble, is the figure of an old man with a long staff in hand. As a title of honor this is said to occur constantly on the monuments. S. R.

## Section 79.

### JOSEPH'S KINDNESS TO HIS BRETHREN. HIS DEATH. POINTS OF CHARACTER.

GENESIS 50 : 14–26.

14 AND Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to
15 bury his father, after he had buried his father. And when Joseph's brethren saw that their
father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us, and will fully requite us all the
16 evil which we did unto him. And they sent a message unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did
17 command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the
transgression of thy brethren, and their sin, for that they did unto thee evil: and now, we
pray thee, forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of thy father And Joseph
18 wept when they spake unto him And his brethren also went and fell down before his face;
19 and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them. Fear not: for am I
20 in the place of God? And as for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good,

21 to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not : I
will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.
22 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house : and Joseph lived an hundred and
23 ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation : the children also of
24 Machir the son of Manasseh were born upon Joseph's knees. And Joseph said unto his breth-
ren, I die : but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land
25 which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children
26 of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So
Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old : and they embalmed him, and he was put in
a coffin in Egypt.

**15-20.** If Joseph had been rancorous, this deprecation had charmed him ; but now it resolves him into tears : they are not so ready to acknowledge their old offence, as he to protest his love ; and if he chide them for anything, it is for that they thought they needed to entreat ; since they might know it could not stand with the fellow-servant of their father's God, to harbor maliciousness, to purpose revenge ; "Am not I under God?" And, fully to secure them he turns their eyes from themselves to the decree of God ; from the action to the event ; as one that would have them think there was no cause to repent of that which proved so successful. *Bp. H.*——**20. Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good.** In using this language Joseph by no means intended to upbraid his brethren with what they had thought against him. His mention of their intentions was only designed as a contrast to the gracious intentions of God. What he had told them seventeen years before, he still adhered to, and the same considerations which induced him to pass by their offence then, induced him to do it still. *Bush.*

The true Christian forgiveness, as here in Joseph's example, is unconditional. It was a frank, full, free remission—consoling them—trying to make them forget—neither by look nor word showing memory, unless the fault had been repeated. It was unconditional, with no reserve behind. That was forgiving and forgetting. No mere maxims got by heart about forgiveness of injuries—no texts perpetually on the tongue will do this—God alone can teach it : By experience ; by a sense of human frailty ; by a perception of "the soul of goodness in things evil ;" by a cheerful trust in human nature ; by a strong sense of God's love ; by long and disciplined realization of the atoning love of Christ : only thus can we get that free, manly, large, princely spirit which the best and purest of all the patriarchs, Joseph, exhibited in his matured manhood. F. W. R.

"Ye thought evil against me ; but God meant it unto good"—that is the golden lesson that comes out of this whole history. The Providence of God was in and over every incident in it, making them all co-operate for the bringing about of the great design which he had for the deliverance of the people in famine, for the education of the children of Israel in Egypt, and for the unification of them at length into a nation capable of taking possession of the Land of Promise. W. M. T.

When God makes use of men's agency for the performance of his counsels, it is common for *him* to mean one thing, and *them* another, even the quite contrary ; but God's counsels shall stand (see Is. 10 : 7). God often brings good out of evil and serves the designs of his providence, even by the sins of men ; not that he is the Author of sin, but his infinite wisdom so overrules events and directs the chain of them, that in the issue that ends in his praise which in its own nature had a direct tendency to his dishonor ; as the putting of Christ to death (Acts 2 : 23). This does not make sin the less sinful, nor sinners the less punishable, but it redounds greatly to the glory of God's wisdom. H.——God does not hinder evil by force ; but even the abuse of human freedom to evil, He takes as a link in the chain of His adorable scheme of providence. Man is judged, not by the results, but by the motives and aim of his conduct ; and moral evil remains evil, although higher wisdom interfere and from it bring forth good. Men were but instruments ; but the counsel of God is fulfilled, and the fulfilment is nothing less than the deliverance of an entire nation. *Van O.*——At the end we see the wisdom and goodness of the design ; while at the beginning, or at the middle, we see nothing but darkness. Thus it was dark when Joseph was thrown into the pit ; when he was sold into Egypt ; when by a false accusation he was cast into prison. The lingering days of that imprisonment were dark ; but they lasted not one moment too long. Had one of the links in the chain of Providence been omitted, Joseph might never have been ruler in Egypt, nor his father and his father's house been kept alive from

famine. Joseph's faith must have been sorely tried, as he could not foresee the end of the Lord, nor the reason of these dealings. Yet that trial and chastening might have been necessary to fit him for his subsequent advancement to power; and without them his exaltation might have been his ruin for time and eternity. God meant it all for good. And see how the subordinate purposes of God entwine together, and interweave themselves with the great purpose of the main scheme. Joseph was blessed, his father's house was saved; but God was also preparing a history by which men may believe his goodness while as yet they are unable to perceive it. The benefits conferred upon Joseph and his family were, perhaps, as nothing, compared with the greater and more enduring benefits to them who read his history. *An.*

**22. Joseph dwelt in Egypt.** At the death of his father Joseph's age was 56, and he lived after that event 54 years more. The records of Egyptian history show that Apophis, the patron of Joseph, reigned *alone* 61 years. It was about the 51st or 54th year of his reign that Jacob and his family came into Egypt; so that he died about seven or ten years after that event, and consequently before the decease of Jacob. Joseph, then, survived Apophis many years, and was minister to his successors on the throne. According to Manetho, the successor of Apophis was named Jannes. He associated with himself his son Asses, who, according to the monuments, was "a most munificent and prosperous monarch." It is highly probable, then, that Jannes and Asses were the monarchs of Egypt during the latter period of the life of Joseph; and so valuable a servant had he proved to Apophis, that they retained him in the office which he held. The benefits he had conferred on Egypt were of the greatest value and importance, and they were not forgotten when he became infirm. He was had in esteem to the end of his days. M.

**Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.** Eighty of which he spent in great prosperity, being but thirty years old when he first stood before Pharaoh. *Bp. Patrick.*—— The life of Joseph was very different from that of his fathers. He lived in a sumptuous palace, honored by the whole nation of Egypt, and by the surrounding nations, as the wisest and one of the greatest of men. Yet he lived in his palace by faith, as his fathers had done in their tents. Not surely for the sake of the honors and pleasures which the court of Egypt could afford him, but rather because it was the will of God that he should dwell there to be a father to Pharaoh, and to be the shepherd of Israel. *Bush.*

**23-26.** Joseph had the joy of seeing his father's blessing commence to be fulfilled. Ephraim's children of the third generation and Manasseh's grandchildren "were brought up upon his knees." As he felt death approaching he gathered "his brethren" about him. Joseph was full of honors in Egypt; he had founded a family than which none was more highly placed. Yet his last act was to disown Egypt, and to choose the lot of Israel, to renounce the present in order to cleave unto the future. It was a noble act of faith, true like that of his fathers! His last words were these: "I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." And his last deed was to take a solemn oath of the children of Israel, to carry up his bones with them into the land of promise. In obedience to his wishes they embalmed his body, and laid it in one of those Egyptian coffins, generally made of sycamore wood, which resembled the shape of the human body. And there, through ages of suffering and bondage, stood the figure-like coffin of Joseph, ready to be lifted and carried thence when the sure hour of deliverance had come. Thus Joseph, being dead, yet spake to Israel, telling them that they were only temporary sojourners in Egypt, that their eyes must be turned away from Egypt unto the land of promise, and that in patience of faith they must wait for that hour when God would certainly and graciously fulfil his own promise. A. E.

For a confession of his own faith, and a confirmation of theirs, he charges them to keep him unburied till that day should come, when they should be settled in the land of promise. He makes them promise him with an oath, that they would bury him in Canaan. Joseph prefers a significant burial in Canaan, before a magnificent one in Egypt. Thus Joseph, by faith in the doctrine of the resurrection and the promise of Canaan, gave *commandment concerning his bones* (Heb. 11:22). He dies in Egypt; but lays his bones at stake, that God will surely visit Israel and bring them to Canaan. H.——The most remarkable of all features in the character of Joseph is that which comes out in his dying charge, "God will surely visit you—bury me not in Egypt—carry my bones hence." So the Apostle evidently regarded it, since in looking over the whole life of Joseph for an instance best illustrating his heroic faith in God, he passes by his wonderful

faith in prison, his faith in the warnings of God of the approaching famine—his faith that could comfort brethren with the assurance "it was not you that did it but God"—and selects this dying charge as the most wonderful instance of all—"By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel and gave commandment concerning his bones." Instead of desiring the Egypt of coming ages to remember their obligation to the son of Jacob, he desires no part or lot there, even a monument for himself, nor desires his brethren to settle permanently there, evinces most wonderful faith, and shows that the word of the God of Abraham and his promise were of infinitely more value in Joseph's view than all the glory of Egypt. And even though that promise reached forward into a far distant future, his faith gave it reality, as the substance of a thing hoped for. It is saying, in effect, do not permit yourselves to be led astray from the covenant by your present prosperity. Remember, this is not your rest. Be ever on the alert, watching for the signal of your departure. You are pilgrims and strangers now, as all your fathers were. Thus the dying saint aims to win them away from that very glory to which he had attained, and from that prosperity to which he had brought them. And well, therefore, might the Apostle cite it as an illustrious instance of faith. S. R.——This man, surrounded by an ancient civilization, and dwelling among granite temples and solid pyramids, and firm-based sphinxes, the very emblems of eternity, confessed that here he had no continuing city, but sought one to come. As truly as his ancestors who dwelt in tabernacles; like Abraham journeying with his camels and herds, and pitching his tent outside the walls of Hebron; like Isaac in the grassy plains of the South country; like Jacob keeping himself apart from the families of the land, their descendant, an heir with them of the same promise, showed that he too regarded himself as a "stranger and a sojourner." Dying, he said, "Carry my bones up from hence." Therefore we may be sure that, living, the hope of the inheritance must have burned in his heart as a hidden light, and made him an alien everywhere but on its blessed soil. And faith will always produce just such effects. In exact proportion to its strength, that living trust in God will direct our thoughts and desires to the "King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off." A. M.

When we are called to leave the earth, the work in which we delighted shall not be lost. We die, but God lives; and we may be sure that under his care it will flourish. And the same thing holds true of the loved ones whom we are called to leave on earth. God remains to take care of them, so that we may say to them as Joseph did to his kinsmen, "I die, but God will surely visit you." Though he have no other legacy to leave them, the dying Christian can leave his God to his children, and is not that enough? Therefore when we are in departing, we may take comfort in the thought that the covenant of Jehovah is with us and with our children, and that he remains to keep that covenant with those whom we leave behind us. W. M. T.

The faith of the dying Jacob dwells upon the memories of the past with all its hereditary associations. It was natural enough, for he had recently left Canaan, an old man, and he longs that his dust shall mingle with that of those he loved. But the dying Joseph's request has reference to the future rather than to the past. As Jacob belongs to the generations that have lived and died in Canaan, so Joseph belongs to the new generations of young Israel that are to spring up in Egypt from him as the fountain-head. Hence it is that while Jacob commanded, take me back to Canaan, and bury me beside my father and my wife, Joseph's command is, "Keep me among you, for after death I would be one of you, and return along with you." And while this is the principle that animated the faith of Joseph, there was also a profound reason of expediency for his course. He desires though dead to be yet speaking, and teaching his people perpetually the lesson so likely to be forgotten by them, which he now seeks to impress by his dying words. Joseph knew how likely they would be amid all this worldly prosperity to suffer God's great truths to drop out of their consciousness. He will therefore stand among them as a perpetual monitor. He will have his embalmed corpse remain unsepulchred, because his people are waiting to return to Canaan, and Joseph, so far as his dead body can represent him, desires to go with them. His corpse shall stand as a perpetual symbol of a family waiting to go when the Lord God of Abraham shall call them. A mysterious but eloquent preacher—the more eloquent as silence is greater than speech—shall be this skeleton preacher, standing in the great banqueting hall of Ephraim's house or Manasseh's to keep Israel in perpetual remembrance. In solemn funeral tones it seemed to say even in the midst of festal gayeties, "This is not your rest, you have another home secured

to you by the covenant of God. Egypt is not your home. Let not its smiles deceive you, nor its after frowns frighten you. Set not your hearts upon it. Remember the promises are all bound up in Canaan. Let the habit of your life be fashioned not after Egypt's license, but after the holy covenant of Canaan. And when sorrows come, as they will come, be assured, as you look upon my unsepulchred body, that the tribulations of Egypt are to end in the joy and peace of Canaan." And that Joseph judged wisely in this heroic act of faith their subsequent history testifies. Amid all the hurry of leaving Egypt on that memorable passover night we are expressly told (Ex. 13 : 19) : "Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." And that the cherished remains were faithfully carried through all the forty years of rebellion and wandering in the wilderness, we know from the second in Joshua 24 : 32. "And the bones of Joseph which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt buried they at Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver, and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph." As this case of Joseph is a beautiful, practical example of what life believers should live, so is this death-bed scene a striking example of what should be a Christian's dying concern. As in life—whether in great prosperity or in the depths of adversity —you should strive, like him, to keep a steady eye on the promised inheritance, so in the arrangements for dying it should be a chief concern that children and friends shall be more effectually admonished, after you are gone, to fix their hearts, not on the transitory glories of Egypt, but upon the enduring pleasures of the Canaan which is promised to the household of faith. S. R.

With the magnanimity of a great and pure soul, he passed uncontaminated through the flatteries and temptations of court-life ; and, like Moses, "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." He has not indulged in any affectation of simplicity, nor has he, in the pride that apes humility, declined the ordinary honors due to a man in his position. He has lived in a region in which such honors make no deep impression ; and in his death he shows where his heart has been. The small voice of God, spoken centuries ago to his forefathers, deafens him to the loud acclaim with which the people do him homage. By later generations this dying request of Joseph's was looked upon as one of the most remarkable instances of faith. And through all the terrible bondage they were destined to suffer, the embalmed body of Joseph stood as the most eloquent advocate of God's faithfulness, ceaselessly reminding the despondent generations of the oath which God would yet enable them to fulfil. And thus, as Joseph had been their pioneer who broke out a way for them into Egypt, so did he continue to hold open the gate and point the way back to Canaan Jacob had been carried up to Canaan as soon as he was dead : Joseph declines this exceptional treatment, and prefers to share the fortunes of his brethren, and will then only enter on the promised land when all his people can go with him As in life, so in death, he took a large view of things, and had no feeling that the world ended in him. His career had taught him to consider national interests ; and now, on his death-bed, it is from the point of view of his people that he looks at the future. *Dods.*

The *person of Joseph* is not mentioned in the Old or the New Testament as a type of Christ. The facts of his life in their bearing on the future were unquestionably typical. A. E.—— It is a fundamental law of the whole of the sacred history, till its ultimate completion, that the way of salvation leads through abasement to exaltation, through serving to ruling, through sacrifice to possession, through suffering to glory. And this fundamental law, of which the highest and most perfect manifestation is seen in the life of the Redeemer, was first displayed in a definite and concrete form in the life of Joseph. The typical character of the life of Joseph consists in this, that he, the first temporary deliverer of Israel, who brought the first stage of its history to a close, like the perfect Saviour of Israel in whom its entire history terminated, was slighted, despised, persecuted, and betrayed by "his own ;" that like Him he passed through abasement, service, and suffering, to exaltation and glory, and also that like Him he succeeded at length in softening their hardened hearts by the fulness of his forgiving love, and in raising his own to the enjoyment of the benefits which he had secured for them. K.

In the four great patriarchs, faith showed itself under different phases or modes of operation. In Abraham we admire the firm, unshaken confidence, and the unhesitating obedience of faith, in all its power and fulness. In Isaac, faith is exercised in patient endurance and suffering, in quietness and waiting. In Jacob, it has to wrestle hard with flesh and blood,—with the corruptions of the heart within, as well as with the ills of the world without. In

Joseph, it is seen both enduring patiently and working laboriously, and is crowned at last with signal victory. W. G. B.——Joseph, indeed, seemed to inherit and happily combine the highest qualities of his ancestors. He had Abraham's dignity and capacity, Isaac's purity and power of self-devotion, Jacob's cleverness, buoyancy and tenacity. *Dods.*

The last of the patriarchs, as Joseph has been called, his character is almost without a flaw, and there are in it some of the most admirable traits ever exhibited to the world. Jehovah was with him ; and therefore, as a modern writer has said, "he was a slave, and yet a free man ; unfortunate, and yet a child of fortune ; abandoned, yet still standing firm in the fiercest temptations ; forlorn, yet still in the presence of God ; an object of impending wrath, yet still preserved alive ; a state prisoner, and yet a prison-keeper ; every way subdued, yet ever again superior to his condition." The Lord was with Joseph to the last. He was always great, and always through faith victorious over evil and sin. His trials were such as few men are called to bear ; but he rose superior to them,—the trials of adversity, and the still greater trials of prosperity, only serving to bring out the noble qualities of his mind. In his self-sacrificing spirit, in his love for his brethren, in his readiness to forgive, in his providing for the necessities of a numerous people, in his elevation to the government of a mighty nation, and in the wisdom with which he administered its affairs, we can now see set forth the greatness of the Redeemer of the world ; but, as the antitype is always superior to the type, so Christ is in every respect far above Joseph, and to him, therefore, *every knee* must bow, and every tongue confess. *Thornley Smith.*

We mark in Joseph a constant recognition of the presence of God with him. That seems to be the one great, all-dominating consciousness of his life. His history was a constant "walk with God." His faith had almost the strength of sight. He felt that the Lord was round about him, and whatever men might intend he knew that God always "meant it unto good." This faith in the constant presence of God with him kept him from being either very much depressed by adversity, or exceedingly elated by prosperity. God was with him in the dungeon, and that kept him from over-estimating its hardships ; God was with him in the chariot, and that kept him from over-estimating its honor. W. M. T.

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Here ends the fourth and last division of the book (chs. 12–50) containing the history of the Patriarchs. The groundwork is now fully laid for the history of the people of Israel, and for all the historical allusions necessary for the illustration of their history, and of the purpose of God in selecting and setting them apart as his chosen people. T. J. C.

The sacred writer here takes leave of the chosen family, and closes the bible of the sons of Israel. It is truly a wonderful book. It lifts the veil of mystery that hangs over the present condition of the human race. It records the origin and fall of man, and thus explains the coexistence of moral evil and a moral sense of God and judgment in the soul of man. It records the cause and mode of the confusion of tongues, and thus explains the concomitance of the unity of the race and the specific diversity of mode or form in human speech. It records the call of Abraham, and thus accounts for the preservation of the knowledge of God and his mercy in one section of the human race, and the corruption or loss of it in all the rest. It solves the fundamental questions of physics, ethics, philology, and theology for the race of Adam. It notes the primitive relation of man to God, and marks the three great stages of human development that came in with Adam, Noah, and Abraham. It points out the three forms of sin that usher in these stages,—the fall of Adam, the intermarriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men, and the building of the tower of Babel. It gradually unfolds the purpose and method of grace to the returning penitent through a Deliverer who is successively announced as the seed of the woman, of Shem, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah. Hence the Lord establishes his covenant successively with Adam, Noah, and Abraham ; with Adam after the fall tacitly, with Noah expressly, and with both generally as the representatives of the race descending from them ; with Abraham specially and instrumentally as the channel through which the blessings of salvation might be at length extended to all the families of the earth. M.

### Patriarchal Dispensation Prototypical.

The Law and the Prophets of the next Dispensation had their prototypes in that of *the Patriarchs.* Among these the distinction of clean and unclean is already known, as much in detail as under the Levitical Law, every animal being arranged by Noah in one class or the other ; and the clean being exclusively used by him for sacrifice. The blood, which is the life

of the animal, is withheld as food. Murder is denounced as demanding death for its punishment. Adultery is forbidden, as we learn from the cases of Pharaoh and Abimelech, of Reuben, and Joseph. Oaths are binding. Fornication is condemned, as in the case of Shechem, who is said "to have wrought folly in Israel, which thing ought not to be done." Marriage with the uncircumcised or idolater is prohibited. A curse is denounced on him that setteth light by his father or his mother. Purifications are enjoined those who approach a holy place, for Jacob bids his people "be clean and change their garments" before they present themselves at Bethel. The brother is already commanded to marry the brother's widow, and to raise up seed unto his brother. These laws, afterward incorporated in the Levitical, drop out incidentally in the book of Genesis, as the course of the narrative happens to turn them up. They are therefore to be reckoned fragments of a more full and complete code which was the groundwork in all probability of the Levitical code itself; for it is difficult to suppose that where there were these there were not others like to them. But this is not all—the Patriarchs had their *sacrifices*, that great and leading rite of the Church of Aaron; the subjects of those sacrifices fixed; useless without the shedding of blood; for what but the violation of an express command full of meaning could have constituted the sin of Cain? It is impossible to read the particulars of Abraham's offering of the heifer, the goat, the ram, the turtle-dove, and the pigeon—their ages, their sex, the circumspection with which he dissects and disposes them—without feeling assured that very minute directions upon all these points were vouchsafed to the *Patriarchal Church*. She had her *Sacraments;* for sacrifice was one, and *circumcision* was the other. Then as she had her *sacrifices* and *sacraments*, so had she her *types*—types which in number scarcely yield to those of the Levitical Law, in precision and interest perhaps exceed them. For we meet with them in the names and fortunes of individuals whom the Almighty Disposer of events, without doing violence to the natural order of things, exhibits as pages of a *living* book in which the *Promise* is to be read—as characters expressing his counsels and covenants writ by his own finger—as actors, whereby he holds up to a world, not yet prepared for less gross and sensible impressions, scenes to come. Indeed I see the *Promise* all Genesis through, so that our Lord might well begin with *Moses* in expounding the things concerning himself; and well might Philip say, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law did write." I see the *Promise* all Genesis through, and if we construct a rude and imperfect Temple of Patriarchal Worship out of the fragments which offer themselves to our hands in that history, the Messiah to come is the spirit that must fill that Temple with his all-pervading presence; none other than he must be the Shekinah of the Tabernacle we have reared. Couple it with this consideration, and the scheme of Revelation, like the physical scheme, proceeds with beautiful *uniformity*—a unity of plan connecting the meanest accidents of a household with the most illustrious visions of a prophet. Abstracted from this consideration, it presents details of actions, some trifling, some even offensive, pursued at a length (when compared with the whole) singularly disproportionate; while things which the angels would desire to look into are passed over and forgotten. But this principle once admitted, and all is consecrated—all assumes a new aspect—trifles that seem at first not bigger than a man's hand, occupy the heavens. It is upon this principle of interpretation that we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who have made those parts of the Mosaic History a stumbling-block to many, which, if rightly understood, are the very testimony of the covenant; and a principle, which is thus extensive in its application and successful in its results, which explains so much that is difficult, and answers so much that is objected against, has, from this circumstance alone, strong presumption in its favor, strong claims upon our sober regard. Such is the structure that appears to unfold itself, if we do but bring together the scattered materials of which it is composed. The *place* of worship—the *priest* to minister—the sacerdotal *dress*—the ceremonial *forms*—the appointed *seasons* for holy things—*preachers*—*prophets*—a code of *laws*—*sacrifices*—*sacraments*—*types*—and a *Messiah* in prospect, as leading a feature of the whole scheme, as He now is in retrospect of a scheme which has succeeded it. Complete the building is not, but still there is symmetry in its component parts, and unity in its whole. Yet Moses was certainly not contemplating any description of a *Patriarchal Church*. He had other matters in his thoughts: he was the mediator not of this system, but of another, which he was now to set forth in all its details, even of the *Levitical*. *Blunt.*

# Section 80.

## INTRODUCTORY TO EXODUS AND ITS HISTORY. FURTHER NOTICES OF EGYPT.

EXODUS 1 : 1–7.

1 Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, which came into Egypt ; every man and his
2 household came with Jacob. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah : Issachar, Zebulun, and
3, 4 Benjamin ; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. And all the souls that came out of the loins
5 of Jacob were seventy souls : and Joseph was in Egypt already. And Joseph died, and all his
6 brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased
7 abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty ; and the land was filled with them.

The manner in which the last four of the five books of Moses are made up is peculiar and should have special attention. Their striking peculiarity is the blending of matters pertaining to the religious system, to the civil code, and to the national history, with no well-defined order or method—the historic facts taking their place probably as they occurred and came before the writer, and the other topics being arranged quite miscellaneously. For the most part the record in these four books pertains to the first two years after Moses entered upon his great mission and the last two years before his death There was a long interval between these periods of which nothing special is said. Passing the first twenty chapters of Exodus, which are history and follow the natural order of the events ; and passing also the thrilling and solemn scenes of Sinai—the great work of Moses was to receive and record the statutes of the civil code, and the directions respecting their religious system, including the construction of the tabernacle ; the services of the priests and Levites ; the sacred festivals, and the whole ritual of worship. H. C.

Moses (the *Servant of the Lord* in *writing* for him, as well as in *acting* for him—with the *pen* as well as with the *rod* of God in his hand), having in the first book of his history preserved and transmitted the records of the church, while it existed in private families, comes in this second book to give us an account of its growth into a great nation. The beginning of the former book shows us how God formed the *world* for himself ; the beginning of this shows us how he formed *Israel* for himself, and both to show forth his praise (Is. 43 : 21). There we have the creation of the world in history, here the redemption of the world in type. The Greek translators called this book *Exodus* (which signifies a *departure*, or *going out*), because it begins with the story of the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt. Some observe that immediately after *Genesis*, which signifies the *beginning*, or *original*, follows *Exodus*, which signifies *a departure ;* for *a time to be born* is immediately succeeded by a *time to die*. H.

The general scope of the book is plainly to preserve the memorial of the great facts of the national history of Israel in its earlier periods, to wit, their deliverance from Egypt, the kindness and faithfulness of God in their subsequent preservation in the wilderness, the delivery of the Law, and the establishment of a new and peculiar system of worship. There is no book in the Bible that records such an illustrious series of miracles, or that keeps the divine agency so constantly before the mind's eye. Nor are its moral lessons less prominent and striking. Adverting to the course of Israel's experience as a nation, Paul adds, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." No sooner had he adverted to their privileges than he describes their chastisements, as inflicted to the intent that we should not so imitate their sin, as to provoke a visitation of the same vengeance. Their whole history forms one grand prediction and outline of human redemption, and of the lot of the church. In the servitude of Israel we behold a lively image of man's natural bondage to sin and Satan. In the deliverance from Egypt is foreshown redemption from this thraldom ; and the journey through the wilderness is a graphic programme of a Christian's journey through life to his final inheritance in the heavenly Canaan. So also, without minute specification, the manna of which the Israelites ate and the rock of which they drank, as well as the brazen serpent by which they were healed, were severally typical

of corresponding particulars under the Christian economy. Add to this, that under the sacrifices and ceremonial service of the Mosaic institute, were described the distinguishing features of the more spiritual worship of the Gospel. *Bush.*

It may seem strange that we have so considerable *a blank in the history between Genesis and Exodus*, and that the long period of time from Jacob's going down into Egypt and his death, and until Moses' birth, is passed silently over. But Israel has no history except so far as it is the organ of revelation. How full of blanks is the historical account of the centuries in the time of the Judges, on account of the broken state of the theocratic life! and how little do we know of the exile, which yet belongs entirely to the historical time! or of the centuries from Ezra to the Maccabees, and beyond them! It is the peculiarity of Israel to possess history and historical literature in the full sense of the words only in proportion as it realizes its vocation in the history of the world. O.——As the express design of the work embraced merely the relation of Israel to Jehovah, the writer was content to pass over the whole interval during which the chosen people were growing into a great people according to the prophecies in the book of Genesis, and simply state that those prophecies were fulfilled. This was all that the centuries in question contributed to the development of the theocratic plan, and in this respect they stood far behind the few days, in which Jehovah magnified himself in his people before the eyes of the Egyptians. *Ranke.*—— There is no historical work in which the selection and arrangement of the events narrated are so exclusively and unmistakably regulated by *one* idea as in the historical books of the Old Testament. Everything is looked at from one point of view; prosperity and misfortune, slavery and redemption, joy and sorrow, are all regarded as operations of God on behalf of his people. *There is nothing mentioned which does not adm't of being easily and intelligibly described from this point of view.* This will explain the fact that nothing is said of the lengthened period during which the Israelites were in Egypt, and so little of the period of the Judges. The historical writings of the Hebrews are as different as they possibly can be from chronicles and annals, or a mere recital of naked facts. *Bertheau.*

**Ex. 1 : 1–7.** The first seven verses are introductory to the whole book. In accordance with the almost invariable custom of the writer, we find a brief recapitulation of preceding events, and a statement of the actual condition of affairs. The names of the Patriarchs and the number of distinct families at the time of the immigration into Egypt are stated in six verses: a single paragraph then records the rapid and continuous increase of the Israelites after the death of Joseph and his contemporaries. *Cook.*

The closing years of the three and a half centuries since their entrance into Egypt found Israel peaceful, prosperous, and probably, in many respects, assimilated to the Egyptians around. "The fathers" had fallen asleep, but their children still held undisturbed possession of the district originally granted them. The land of Goshen, in which they were located, is to this day considered the richest province of Egypt, and could, even now, easily support a million more inhabitants than it numbers. Goshen extended between the most eastern of the ancient seven mouths of the Nile and Palestine. The border-land was probably occupied by the more nomadic branches of the family of Israel, to whose flocks its wide tracts would afford excellent pasturage; while the rich banks along the Nile and its canals were the chosen residence of those who pursued agriculture. Most likely such would also soon swarm across to the western banks of the Nile, where we find traces of them in various cities of the land. There they would acquire a knowledge of the arts and industries of the Egyptians. The simple patriarchal forms of worship would suit the circumstances in Egypt much better than those which the religion of Israel afterward received. *Three great observances* here stand out prominently. Around them the faith and the worship alike of the ancient patriarchs, and afterward of Israel, may be said to have clustered. They are: *circumcision*, *sacrifices*, and the *Sabbath*. We have direct testimony that the rite of circumcision was observed by Israel in Egypt (Ex. 4 : 24–26). As to *sacrifices*, even the proposal to celebrate a great sacrificial feast in the wilderness implies that sacrificial worship had maintained its hold upon the people. The direction to gather on the Friday two days' provision of manna, and the introduction of the Sabbath command by the word "Remember," convey the impression of previous *Sabbath observance* on the part of Israel. Indeed, the manner in which many things, as, for example, the practice of vows, are spoken of in the law, seems to point back to previous religious rites among Israel. These outward observances indicate how, even during those centuries of silence and loneliness in Egypt, Israel still

cherished the fundamental truths of their ancestral religion. A. E.

As God had chosen the people of Israel as conservators of his Unity and Providence, and of his slowly brightening promises of Redemption, so he perpetually interferes to keep alive the remembrance of these great truths, the object of their selection from mankind ; and which nothing less, it should seem, could have preserved through so many ages. In other respects the chosen people appear to have been left to themselves to pass through the ordinary stages of the social state. *Milman.*——Rightly to estimate even the ethnical position and character of the Israelites, it is indispensable that we keep in mind the peculiar work for which, both by prophecy and history, they were specially set apart by God. It is the more necessary to keep their true mission and aim in view, because there are no results beyond those connected with that mission and aim, to justify their claim to be regarded as the peculiar people of God, dealt with as God never dealt with any other nation. Apart from their relation to the spiritual kingdom of Christ, they never made any great figure in the world's history. They had the same pursuits as their neighbors ; they were animated by the same pride of race, the same patriotism, the same ambition for national greatness. They had no higher aims, and as a rule only reached much lower attainments than many other nations. For a brief period, in the reigns of David and of Solomon, worldly glory appeared to be within their reach. The momentary splendor faded amid the troubles of the disruption of the kingdom which followed the death of Solomon. Upon the whole, many other nations have been more prosperous ; have, by policy or force of arms, acquired greater power and wider territories ; have, within the sphere of action common to them all, exercised more influence on the world's history. Other nations have done more to promote intellectual culture ; to advance the physical sciences ; to extend commerce ; to perfect the useful arts, as well as what are called the fine arts ; to further the progress of philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy ; and to enrich the world with masterpieces in architecture, painting, sculpture, and some departments of literature. As a nation, the only distinction which can be claimed for Israel is that already noticed. Nor, according to the Bible, was any other distinction ever contemplated. Temporal blessings were conditionally promised, the condition being fidelity on their part in carrying out their true destiny ; but even with this limitation mere worldly greatness was not an achievement which they were at any time encouraged to hope for. Any promises which appear at first sight to point to such a result will be found, on investigation, to require to be interpreted figuratively as looking forward to a kingdom which is not of this world—the kingdom of Him who was a greater even than Solomon, and in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, for all are one in Him. Nor, let it be added, is any other reason for even the most extraordinary of the instances of God's distinguishing favor to the chosen seed required. *Lee.*

In the rich and fruitful land of Egypt, and especially in the country of Goshen, had the descendants of Israel become a great, powerful people, amounting to more than two million souls. We here behold the first instance of that remarkable phenomenon, which afterward is often presented to our view,—that God's covenanted people are placed beside and in the midst of the most cultivated and powerful nations of antiquity in order to enjoy the advantages of their worldly civilization ; at the same time, by their marked severance from the idolatry of these nations, and by their permanence (while one people after another beside them decayed and passed away), to bear witness to their own Divine origin. Egypt is that ancient kingdom which has erected monuments of its grandeur surpassing those of any early state, which still remain and astonish us by the magnificence of their design and by the degree of cultivation displayed in them. *Gerl.*

One important result of late Egyptian researches is the establishment of a complete system of transcription of Hebrew and Egyptian characters. At present no doubt remains as to the exact correspondence of the Hebrew letters with phonetic signs, or groups of common occurrence in papyri and monumental inscriptions. *Cook.*——The Egyptian monuments furnish the most striking proofs of the veracity of the Biblical narratives. Any one must be blind who refuses to see the flood of light which the *papyri* and other Egyptian monuments are throwing upon the venerable records of Holy Scripture. *Brugsch.*

We may conclude from the words of Joseph (Gen. 46 : 31, 32) that the Israelites pursued in Egypt—in the pasture lands of Goshen, on the borders of the wilderness—that patriarchal, pastoral mode of life which their fathers had done in Canaan. But we are expressly told that they likewise followed field tillage and gardening. They sowed and watered after the manner

of the Egyptians (Deut. 11 : 10, 11). There were "cunning" artificers among them, who could work in cutting precious stones, in gold and in silver (Exod. 35 : 32, 33). They learned the arts of weaving, spinning, the preparation of leather, from the people, the most celebrated in the ancient world as the inventors of such arts. They made the bricks for the fortresses, Pithom and Rameses. Even when living among the dominant people, they were governed by the heads of their own tribes, who had gradually sprung up from out of the original family government of the patriarchs. *Gerl.*—— As the tribes had their princes, so these clans, families, or thousands had their respective chiefs, who were called heads of houses of fathers, heads of thousands, and sometimes simply heads. Harrington denominates these two classes of officers phylarchs, or governors of tribes, and patriarchs, or governors of families. Both, while the Israelites were yet in Egypt, were comprehended under the general name of elders. That the tribes were governed, each by its own prince, that they were subdivided into clans, or groups of related families, having also their respective chiefs, and that these princes of tribes and chiefs of clans received the common appellation of "elders of Israel," will be evident to any one who will compare the first chapter of Numbers with Exod. 3 : 16 ; 4 : 29, and 6 : 14, 15. These princes of tribes and heads of thousands, the elders of Israel, were the rulers of the people, while they remained still subject to the power of the Pharaohs, and constituted a kind of "imperium in imperio." E. C. W.

Kitto regards the Israelites, at the period of their descent into Egypt, as distinguished by all the characteristics of the wandering and barbarous shepherd tribes, and not improbably giving occasion at first, by some overt acts of plunder, to the Egyptian government to adopt harsh measures toward them. Hengstenberg, on the other hand, maintains that the roughness and barbarity properly distinguishing the shepherd tribes never belonged to the Hebrews, —that their possessing the character of shepherds at all, arose chiefly from the circumstances in which they were placed during their early sojourn in Canaan,—that they were glad to abandon their wandering life and dwell in settled habitations, whenever an opportunity afforded, —that, set down, as they afterward were, in one of the most fertile and cultivated regions of Egypt, which they held from the first as a settled possession, their manner of life was throughout different from the nomadic, was distinguished by possessions in lands and houses, and by the various employments and comforts peculiar to Egyptian society. This view must be adopted with some modification as to the earlier periods of their history ; for though the Israelites never entered fully into the habits of the nomad tribes, yet they were manifestly tending more and more in that direction toward the time of their descent into Egypt. The tendency was there gradually checked, and the opposite extreme at last reached,—as it appears that at the time of the Exodus they had all houses with door-posts (Ex. 12 : 4, 7, etc.), lived to a considerable extent intermingled with the Egyptians in their cities (Ex. 3 : 20–22 ; 11 : 1–3 ; 12 : 35, 36), were accustomed to the agricultural occupations peculiar to the country, took part even in its finest manufactures, such as were prepared for the king (1 Chron. 4 : 21–23), and enjoyed the best productions both of the river and the land (Num. 11 : 5 ; 20 : 5). It is but natural to suppose, however, that some compulsion was requisite to bring them to this state of civilization and refinement ; and as it was a state necessary to fit them for setting up the tabernacle and occupying aright the land of Canaan, we see the overruling hand of God in the very compulsion that was exercised. P. F. ——It is a mistake to regard the Israelites at their exodus from Egypt as a rude race of nomads, in whom we may not presuppose even the smallest beginnings of culture. They appear in the Pentateuch as an *unmanageable*, but not as an *uncultivated* people. While, for example, to take a single illustration, the Pentateuch gives no trace of the art of writing in the time of the patriarchs, this is presupposed as employed among the people when they went out of Egypt, as the name of their functionaries which were taken from the people shows—they were *Shoterim*, or writers. O.——The art of writing, in Babylon as in Egypt, goes back to the most ancient period. On the bricks of the oldest cities we find letters in use, and that not in their first stage ; that is, not hieroglyphic. *Southall.*——That the Israelites possessed an alphabet and knew the art of writing in the Mosaic age is not subject to reasonable doubt, and is now almost universally admitted. *Kuenen.*——We need not scruple to assume that Israel knew and used an alphabet in Egypt before Moses. *Ewald.*

Europe has learned from Egypt its earliest lessons of geometry, chemistry, medicine, architecture, and sculpture. We are beginning more and more to understand this, as we learn that much of the discovery in science and the arts heretofore attributed to the Greeks and the

Arabians existed long previously in Egyptian papyri. It is very wonderful to find in these ancient documents, chemical facts, arithmetical formulæ, and medical recipes, almost in the identical forms in which they were copied by Greeks and Arabs, heretofore believed to be their authors. Independently of this we can discern in the great works of the early Egyptians more of knowledge both of nature and of practical science, than we can gather from the scanty remains of their writings. Early Egyptian art has also in it the germs of all that has succeeded it. *Dawson.*

**7.** On the boundary of the Holy Land the Lord had encouraged Israel : "Fear not to go down into Egypt ; for I will there make of thee a great nation." And the Book of Exodus opens with the record that this promise had been fulfilled, for "the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty ; and the land was filled with them." A. E.

Each of the twelve patriarchs, when they went down into Egypt, would probably carry with him a household of herdsmen and retainers ; and all the males born in the house being circumcised, their descendants would be reckoned as "children of Israel." Thus the original number that multiplied into 2,000,000 was not seventy, but more probably some 2000 or 3000. And with this agrees the narrative, which tells us how they brought all their flocks and their herds with them, implying a very large number of servants and herdsmen, and how a large tract of country was at once assigned them. J. P. N.

How long a period elapsed between the migration into Egypt under Jacob, and the Exodus, or departure, under Moses, has been a question debated from the earliest ages by Jewish, no less than Christian writers. While some assign the whole duration of 430 years to the captivity in Egypt, others include the residence of the patriarchs, 215 years, within this period. The vestiges of this controversy appear in all the earlier writings. The Hebrew and Samaritan texts, the different copies of the Greek version of the Scriptures, differ. Stephen, in the Acts, seems to have followed one opinion. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, the other. Josephus contradicts himself repeatedly. The great body of English divines follow the latter hypothesis ; the great modern scholars of Germany generally prefer the former. The following brief statement may throw some light on this intricate subject. The Jews were firmly and religiously persuaded that their genealogies were not merely accurate, but complete. As then only two names appeared between Levi and Moses, those of Kohath and Amram, and the date of life assigned to these two seemed irreconcilable with the longer period of 430 years, they adopted very generally the notion that only 215 years were passed in Egypt. They overlooked, or left to miraculous intervention to account for a still greater difficulty, the prodigious increase in one family during one generation. In the desert the males of the descendants of Kohath are reckoned at 8609. Kohath had four sons, from each son then, in one generation, must have sprung on the average 2150 males. On this hypothesis the alternative remains, either that some names have been lost from the genealogies between Kohath and Amram, or between Amram and Moses, a notion confirmed by the fact that in the genealogy of Joshua in the book of Chronicles, he stands twelfth in descent from Joseph, while Moses is the fourth from Levi : or, as there are certain grounds for suspecting, some general error runs through the whole numbering of the Israelites in the desert. . . . Some curious particulars of this period may be gleaned from the genealogies (1 Chron. 7 : 21, 22). Some intercourse with the native country was kept up for a time. Certain sons of Ephraim were slain in a freebooting expedition to drive the cattle of the inhabitants of Gath. Another became ruler of the tribe of Moab. Some became celebrated in Egypt as potters, and manufacturers in cotton (byssus). *Milman.* (See p. 325.)

### Egypt.

The scriptural name "Ham" seems to be identical with the indigenous name of Egypt, as it appears in hieroglyphics, "Khemmi," and refers to the black color of the soil. The special name in scriptural geography was "Mizraim," a noun in the dual number, signifying the *two* (*i.e.*, the Upper and Lower) *Misr* the name by which Egypt is still designated by the Arabs : it means "red mud." The Nile is occasionally named "Shihor" (Is. 23 : 3) ; but more commonly "Yeor" (Gen. 41 : 1 ; Ex. 1 : 22), after the Coptic *iaro*, "river ;" the Hebrews also applied to it sometimes the term *yom*, "sea" (Is. 19 : 5 ; Ez. 32 : 2). The ancient history of Egypt may be divided into three portions :—the old monarchy, extending from the foundation of the kingdom to the invasion of the Hyksos ; the middle, from the entrance to the expulsion of the Hyksos ; and the new, from the re-establishment of the native monarchy by Amosis to the Persian conquest. Of the middle

monarchy we only know that a nomadic horde called *Hyksos* for several centuries occupied and made Egypt tributary; that their capital was Memphis; that in the Sethroite name they constructed an immense earth-camp, which they called Abaris, that at a certain period of their occupation two independent kingdoms were formed in Egypt, one in the Thebaid, which held intimate relations with Ethiopia; another at Xois, among the marshes of the Nile; and that, finally, the Egyptians regained their independence, and expelled the Hyksos, who thereupon retired into Palestine. The Hyksos form the *fifteenth*, *sixteenth*, and *seventeenth* dynasties. Manetho says they were Arabs, but he calls the six kings of the fifteenth dynasty Phœnicians. *The New Monarchy* extends from the commencement of the *eighteenth* to the end of the *thirtieth* dynasty. The kingdom was consolidated by Amosis, who succeeded in expelling the Hyksos, and thus prepared the way for the foreign expeditions which his successors carried on in Asia and Africa, extending from Mesopotamia in the former to Ethiopia in the latter continent. The glorious era of Egyptian history was under the *nineteenth* dynasty, when Sethi I., B.C. 1322, and his grandson, Rameses the Great, B.C. 1311, both of whom represent the Sesostris of the Greek historians, carried their arms over the whole of Western Asia and southward into *Soudan*, and amassed vast treasures, which were expended on public works. Under the later kings of the *nineteenth* dynasty the power of Egypt faded: the *twentieth* and *twenty-first* dynasties achieved nothing worthy of record; but with the *twenty-second* we enter upon a period that is interesting from its associations with biblical history, the first of this dynasty, Sheshonk I. (Seconchis) B C. 990, being the Shishak who invaded Judea in Rehoboam's reign and pillaged the Temple (1 Kings 14 : 25). Of this event and of the subsequent history of Egypt, we shall have further occasion to speak. P. S.

The land of Egypt has well been called "the land of wonders." The nature of the country and the history of its people are equally extraordinary. For the most part, the land of Egypt is just a narrow strip, extending to the breadth of a few miles on each side of the river Nile, but expanding, toward the mouths of that river, into an extensive plain, called, from its resemblance to the Greek letter Δ, a Delta. Its total length is about 500 miles; so that, with Palestine, Greece, Rome, and Britain, it ranks among the very small countries that have had a wonderful influence on the rest of the world. W. G. B.

There has probably been little change in the physical aspect of Egypt since the days when Joseph was made "ruler over all the land of Egypt," or since those in which Moses led the Israelites from the land of their bondage. The Valley of the Nile, or Upper Egypt, must always have presented the same general appearance; the mysterious river rolling silently northward between two, almost unbroken, table-topped walls of limestone, which here approach the water, there retire from it, leaving large plains of the richest soil, to which new life is given each year by the fertilizing waters of the great river. Over these flats is spread a carpet of luxuriant vegetation of the brightest green, which is in striking and not unpleasing contrast to the yellow hills of the barren desert on either side. So, too, the Delta must always have been a great plain, intersected by the many arms of the river and by innumerable canals, which irrigated the country and spread the life-giving waters over an area far greater than that which is now cultivated. The sands of the desert have been allowed to encroach and swallow up large tracts, such as the "land of Goshen," which was formerly the "best of the land," but is now little better than the surrounding desert; and many of the canals and lakes, once well stocked with fish, have dried up, and no longer fertilize the land; such is especially the case with the great canal that connected the Nile with the Gulf of Suez, and gave life to the Wady Tumeilat, which is now covered with sand. The Delta is triangular in form, its eastern and western faces being bounded by branches of the river, and its base by the sea; its fertility was surprising, and is alluded to in several passages of the Bible, as in Gen. 13 : 10, where the Jordan valley is said to have been "like a garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt." The rainfall is so slight that it has no influence on the cultivation, a peculiarity noticed by Zechariah (14 : 18); and the necessity for irrigation is mentioned in Deut. 11 : 10, 11, where a contrast is drawn between the land of bondage and the Promised Land, which was to be "a land of hills and valleys," that "drinketh water of the rain of heaven." *Wilson.*

Egypt in that age stood at the summit of the world's civilization, a fully organized kingdom, a great and highly cultured people. There is most ample proof that Egypt was then eminent above any other nation in learning, wisdom, science, and art; in jurisprudence, and in the administration of law; in industry and in wealth; in short, in all the main appliances

and results of a high civilization. The antiquities of Ancient Egypt are the marvel of our times. Her temples, pyramids, and obelisks; her paintings and works of art, have come down to our age in most wonderful preservation, living witnesses to her ancient greatness. There was no other kingdom on the face of the earth where a man like Moses could have been educated and trained to become the law-giver of the Hebrew nation, or where such a system of civil law as God gave his people by the hand of Moses could have taken its rise and could have been understood, accepted, appreciated, and ultimately wrought into established usage and into the national life. H. C.

The *temples* reared by the Egyptians to their gods were exceedingly magnificent. The remains of some of them are still among the wonders of the world. The priesthood was a large, wealthy, and highly privileged class, with the king himself, as high priest, at their head. Their sacred rites were numerous and varied, and included much that was fitted to dazzle the senses of the multitude. Prominent in their religious belief was the doctrine of future retribution. This was frequently depicted in paintings. W. G. B.——Where could Clio write their history so appropriately as on the walls of their temples? And never were pages more graphic. The gathering, the march, the melée —the Pharaoh's prowess, standing erect as he always does in his car, no charioteer, the reins attached to his waist, the arrow drawn to his ear, his horses all fire, springing into the air like Pegasuses,—and then the agony of the dying, transfixed by his dart, the relaxed limbs of the slain,—Homer's truth itself; and lastly, the triumphant return, the welcome home, and the offerings of thanksgiving to Amunre—the fire, the discrimination with which these ideas are bodied forth, they must be seen to judge of it. *Lord Lindsay.*

All hereabout is full of deepest interest—sepulchres, monuments, historical records, and sites of ancient cities. We are in a land of dreams, and all the surroundings bear dreamy outlines; gigantic in their proportions, and rendered even more gigantic by the manner in which they are disposed. Probably the most magnificent of these monuments in Upper Egypt—the Pathros of Scripture—are those of its capital, Thebes, the No, or No Amon of the Bible. It were impossible in brief space to describe its temple. The sanctuary itself was small, but opposite to it a court opened upon a hall into which the great cathedral of Paris might be placed, without touching the walls on either side! One hundred and forty columns support this hall, the central pillars being sixty-six feet high, and so wide that it would take six men with extended arms to embrace one of them. The mind gets almost bewildered by such proportions. All around, the walls bear representations, inscriptions, and records—among others, those of Shishak, who captured Jerusalem during the reign of Rehoboam. But the temple itself is almost insignificant when compared with the approach to it, which was through a double row of sixty or seventy ram-headed sphinxes, placed about eleven feet apart from each other. Another avenue led to a temple which enclosed a lake for funeral rites; and yet a third avenue of sphinxes extended a distance of 6000 feet to a palace. A. E.

The incidental confirmations of the Bible from the tombs are numerous and striking. It seems, as one goes from tomb to tomb, that he is visiting the picture galleries, the manufactories, and the private houses of the old Egyptians, and mingling familiarly in their every-day scenes. It is not death, but life, one here beholds; or, rather, as at Pompeii, life exhumed from the chambers of the dead. In the eloquent language of Cardinal Wiseman, "When, after so many ages of darkness and uncertainty, we see the lost history of this people revive, and take its stand beside that of other ancient empires; when we read the inscriptions of its kings, recording their mighty exploits and regal qualities, and gaze upon their monuments, with the full understanding of the events which they commemorate, the impression is scarcely less striking to an enlightened mind than what the traveller would feel, if, when silently pacing the catacombs at Thebes, he should see those corpses, which the embalmer's skill has for so many ages rescued from decay, on a sudden burst their cerements, and start resuscitated from their niches."

These old Egyptians, whose tombs and temples are now open to our inspection, and whose social, commercial, religious, and political history is written upon the imperishable rock, where all may read it—these ancients, over whom we of this nineteenth century are wont to boast in all the "improvements" and the material comforts of life, had *wealth* beyond all computation; *commerce* in all the "precious things" of Arabia, of Persia, and the Indies, in gold, and jewels, and spices, and silks, and aromatics; *manufactures* of fine linen and embroidered work, of vases of porcelain and pottery, of oil, of chariots, of baskets and wicker-work, of *glass* ornaments and utensils, and of

many other articles of comfort and of luxury ; *husbandry* that made Egypt the granary of the world, and once and again the support of neighboring nations in time of famine ; *civilization* that well supplied the comforts of domestic life, that furnished their houses with chairs, sofas, and couches for their parlors, as well as with copper utensils, caldrons, tripods, mortars, pallets, ovens for their kitchens ; *mechanic arts* to fabricate various and formidable weapons of war, and to erect buildings and monuments that would now exhaust the combined strength and treasures of all the nations of Europe ; an art that could excavate from the quarry a block of sienite weighing nearly nine hundred tons, that could transport it more than a hundred miles, —the distance of the nearest quarry, —and that could erect this block, when carved into a statue, upon a pedestal prepared for it at the gateway of a temple whose porch was lined with similar, though smaller figures ; an art that could arrange in perfect order a double row of fourteen pillars, each upward of seventy feet high by thirty-six in circumference, and raise to the top of these stones thirty feet in length by six feet in breadth, and the same in thickness, and then dispose about this central avenue other avenues formed by a hundred and twenty-two majestic pillars, in like manner capped with gigantic stones, until the roofed temple covered an acre and a half, and with its surroundings ten times that surface, and this centuries before Solomon built the inferior temple at Jerusalem ; an art, in short, that could build Karnac and the pyramids : *fine arts* also ; *sculpture*, which if it be less delicate than that of Greece, is more grand and spirited, which at times unites beauty with grandeur, but which in majesty of conception is rivalled only by the contemporary sculptures of Nineveh ; *painting*, which after four thousand years retains the freshness of its colors ; *music*, which invented both wind and stringed instruments ; *mathematical science*, that could arrange with precision and skill all architectural lines and forms ; *astronomical science*, that decorated the ceilings of temples with celestial signs ; *geological science*, so far as this relates to the selection of different qualities of stone for different qualities of soil ; *philosophy*, that evolved the great idea of a judgment and a future state and the soul's immortality, though in the form of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, a philosophy that Moses and Plato studied, and that gave wisdom to the world ; and all these under the guardianship of a *physical force* that was for centuries victorious upon every field, that subdued Ethiopia and Judea, and swept Syria to the Euphrates, and that was shielded at home upon three sides by the mountains and the desert, and on the fourth side by the sea. And yet with all its wealth, and commerce, and manufactures, and agriculture, and civilization, and art, and science, and philosophy, and material force, and natural barriers, Egypt has perished, utterly and forever perished. The mighty conquerors of Egypt, too, have perished. The Persian empire, the Macedonian, the Roman, are fallen to rise no more. J. P. T.

[For other notices of Egypt, see Sections 39 and 67.]

## Section 81.

### PERSECUTION OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

EXODUS 1 : 8–22.

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his
9 people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we : come,
10 let us deal wisely with them ; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth
out any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them
11 up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their
12 burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they
afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad And they were
13 grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to

14 serve with rigour : and they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigour.

15 And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was
16 Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah : and he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the birthstool ; if it be a son, then ye shall kill
17 him ; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not
18 as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have
19 saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women ; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwife
20 come unto them. And God dealt well with the midwives : and the people multiplied, and
21 waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made
22 them houses. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

**8–14.** *The oppression of Israel by the Egyptians.* The new king who arose appears not to have been merely *another* king, in ordinary succession, but a king of a new dynasty, foreign to the traditions and maxims of his predecessors. *Alf.*——The first persecutor of the Israelites may be distinguished as the Pharaoh of the Oppression, especially as he commenced, and probably long carried on, the persecution. The general view is that he was an Egyptian, a king of the nineteenth dynasty. The chief points in favor of this are the name of the city Raamses, whence it has been argued that one of the oppressors was a king Rameses, and the probable change of line. The first king of this name known was head of the nineteenth dynasty. Manetho says the Israelites left Egypt in the reign of Menptah, who was great-grandson of the first Rameses, and son and successor of the second. *Dic. B.*

From the beginning of the eighteenth dynasty, when the Hyksos were expelled by Aahmes I., the monumental history of Egypt is tolerably complete ; the succession of nearly all the Pharaohs and the principal events in the reigns of the most distinguished are distinctly recorded. The chronology, however, is uncertain.

18th Dynasty.—Aahmes I. (Nefertari Queen), Amenhotep I., Thotmes I. (Aahmes Regent), Thotmes II., Thotmes III, Amenhotep II., Thotmes IV, Amenhotep III., Amenhotep IV. (who took the name Khun-Aten), three other kings not recognized as legitimate, Horemheb.

19th Dynasty.—Rameses I., Seti I, *Rameses II.*, *Meneptah I.*, Seti II. or Meneptah II., Amenmeses, Siptah, and Tauser. *Cook.*

The period of the sojourn reckoned at 430 years, the administration of Joseph would fall in the time of the Shepherd Kings, while their successors of the XVIIIth Dynasty would mark the beginning of the period of oppression. All Egyptologists now hold Ramses II. and his son Menephtah to be the great oppressor and the Pharaoh of the Exodus respectively. Their combined reigns correspond with the length of the persecution in the Bible, and their characters in their own records are the counterparts of the Biblical portraits of the inflexible tyrant and his vacillating successor. The evidence of Manetho and the researches of Lepsius and Brugsch have placed this beyond doubt. *R. S. Poole.* [See Sections 84, 90, close.]

That Ramses II. was the Pharaoh of the oppression, has long been suspected by Egyptian scholars. The accounts of the wars of himself and his predecessors in Canaan show that up to the date of his death that country was not yet inhabited by the Israelites. But the question as to the date of the Exodus, and consequently as to the Pharaoh of the oppression, has now been finally set at rest by the excavations recently undertaken at Tel-el-Maskhûta. This is the name of some large mounds near Tel-el-Kebir and other places which were the scene of the late war ; and M. Naville, who has excavated them for the Egyptian Exploration Fund, has found inscriptions in them which show not only that they represent an ancient city whose religious name was Pithom, while its civil name was Succoth, but also that the founder of the city was Ramses II. In Greek times the city was called Heroöpolis, or Ero, from the Egyptian word *ara*, "a storehouse," reminding us that Pithom and Raamses, which the Israelites built for the Pharaoh, were "treasure-cities" (v. 11). M. Naville has even discovered the treasure-chambers themselves. They are very strongly constructed, and divided by brick partitions from eight to ten feet thick, the bricks being sun-baked, and made some with and some without straw. In these straw-

less bricks we may see the work of the oppressed people when the order came : "Thus saith the Pharaoh, I will not give you straw." The treasure-chambers occupy almost the whole area of the old city, the walls of which are about 650 feet square and 22 feet thick. Its name Pithom—in Egyptian Pa-Tum—signifies the city of the Setting Sun ; and since it had another name, Succoth, we can now understand how it was that the Israelites started on their march not from Goshen, but from Succoth (Ex. 13 : 20), that is, from the very place where they had been working. *Sayce.*

**11.** The *taskmasters* were Egyptian bailiffs or general managers ; the *officers* (5 : 6) were Hebrews, and had each the charge of a certain number, of whom and their work they had to keep account (hence called *Shoterim* or *Writers*). When recently in Egypt, I saw this very system still in operation on a road which the Viceroy was constructing. W. L. A.——The Israelites were employed in forced labors, probably in detachments, each under an Egyptian "taskmaster :" but they were not reduced to slavery, properly speaking, nor treated as captives of war. They continued to occupy and cultivate their own district, and they retained possession of their houses, flocks, herds, and other property until they emigrated from Egypt. *Cook.*——The ancient monuments of Egypt confirm the statements of sacred history, showing that the Egyptians employed national bondmen in the construction of their vast national works ; that they placed over them taskmasters ; that when the workmen fell short of the required tale of brick, their masters put them to more severe labors, and in some cases to labors of other sort. It should be noted that this bondage differed from the slavery of modern times in this one respect—that the bondmen were held by the king and the nation in their national capacity and not by individuals. The Hebrews were not held as private but as public property. The king and the nation as such bore therefore the responsibility and guilt of this oppression, and God let his judgments smite them for the most part in such a way as to indicate their sin. H. C.

**11, 14.** The construction of "store-cities" at the required period has received recent illustration of the most remarkable kind. The explorers have uncovered near Tel-el-Kebir an ancient city, which the inscriptions found on the spot show to have been built, in part at any rate, by Rameses II., and which is of so peculiar a construction as to suggest at once to those engaged in the work the idea that it was built for a "store-city." The town is altogether a square, enclosed by a brick wall. The area contained within the wall is estimated at about ten acres. Nearly the whole of this space is occupied by solidly built square chambers, divided one from the other by brick walls from eight to ten feet thick, which are unpierced by window or door, or opening of any kind. It further appears, from several short inscriptions, that the name of the city was Pa-Tum, or Pithom ; and there is thus no reasonable doubt that one of the two cities built by the Israelites has been laid bare, and answers completely to the description given of it. Of the twin city, Rameses, the remains have not yet been identified. We know, however, from the inscriptions, that it was in the immediate vicinity of Tanis, and that it was built perhaps in part by Seti I, but mainly by his son Rameses II. It lends additional interest to the discovery of Pithom that the city is found to be built almost entirely of brick. It was in brick-making that the Israelites are here said (Exodus ch. 1 : 14 ; 5 : 7–19) to have been employed. G. R.

*The discovery of Pithom* by Naville is of incomparable value : 1. In attesting the truth of the sacred narrative in the Hebrew ("treasure" or "store" city) and Septuagint ("fortified") versions, and in its local coloring of bricks with or without straw, with stubble, and of the use of mortar. 2. In identifying Rameses II., "the Pharaoh of the oppression," as the builder of Pithom. 3. In disclosing valuable monumental records, especially the "Stone of Pithom," relating to its subsequent history. 4. In identifying the site with Heroöpolis and Ero, the Greek and Roman towns. 5. In monumentally showing Succoth to have been the civil name of Pithom, and that Pithom-Succoth was the capital of the district, which was Succoth. 6. In its relation to the geography of the Exodus route and "the land of Goshen." Brugsch and Ebers representing German, Revillout French, Pleyte Dutch opinion, have accepted the site disclosed by Naville as that of Pithom. So have Maspero, Rawlinson, Poole, Miss Edwards, Tomkins, Sayce, and the Americans, J. A. Paine, A. H. Kellogg, and H. C. Trumbull. *The explorations of Sân Tanis* (the biblical Zoan) by Petrie, although in comparative incipiency, have proved Avaris, the long-lost capital of the Shepherd Kings, to have been there ; have disclosed the "colossus of colossi," the most gigantic of all statues known to man (that of Rameses II.), and the wall of the great temple ; statues, pylons, sphinxes, tablets, Ptolemaic and other household and sacred

relics ; articles in glass, bronze, porcelain, alabaster, etc. ; silver and gold, and even that rare metal in Egypt, iron. *W. C. Winslow.*

**15-22.** The new Pharaoh oppresses them cruelly ; they are a prey to the miseries of slavery, the contagion of idolatry, to all the evils, all the perils, physical and moral, which can afflict a nation numerically weak, fallen under the yoke of one powerful and civilized. The Hebrews nevertheless persist in their religious faith, cling to their national reminiscences ; they do not suffer their nationality to be lost in and confounded with that of their masters ; they endure without offering any active resistance ; they await their Deliverer. *Guizot.*

**21. Made them houses.** They married Hebrews and became mothers in Israel. The expression is proverbial (see 2 Sam. 7 : 11, 27). *Cook.*——As they preserved the people and promoted their increase, therefore God blessed them in the preservation and increase of their families. *Gerl.*——Scripture has preserved the names of these courageous women, and told us that their motive was "fear of God" (in the Hebrew with the article, "the God," as denoting the living and true God). And as they were the means of "making" or upbuilding the houses of Israel, so God "made them houses." It is true that, when challenged by the king, they failed to speak out their true motive ; but, as Augustine remarks, "God forgave the evil on account of the good, and rewarded their piety, though not their deceit." A. E.

**22.** In the whole of this history, as in so many in the Old Testament, sin and its punishment are shown to us in a close relation to each other. As the children of the Israelites were thrown into the water, so do we find that the Egyptians themselves perish in the water. *Gerl.*——All these plans of Pharaoh are destined to come to naught. Persecution and death cannot damage the Church of God. The Christian is not weakened thereby ; but the Church ever increases under the Cross, under the tyranny of the world and of the Devil : as an old doctor of the Church, Tertullian, hath said, "The Church is watered by the blood of Christians." *Luther.*——The church was lying on the burning coals of persecution—a hard duty ; but great good must ever have its birth in the house of great sorrows. Then followed the school-days, when the church sat down before Sinai, received the Law, and the rites and ceremonies embodying great principles and great truths. The Levitical was the material age, when the child must be instructed by pictures, disciplined and corrected till ripe for something better. *Todd.*

It is no new thing for Egypt to be unkind and cruel to Israel. Israelites and Egyptians are of contrary dispositions and inclinations ; the delight of one is the abomination of the other. Besides, it is the duty of Israel to depart out of Egypt. Israel is in Egypt in respect of abode, not of desire. Egypt is not Israel's rest. If Egypt were an House of hospitality, it would more dangerously and strongly detain the Israelites, than in being an house of bondage. The thoughts of Canaan would be but slight and seldom, if Egypt were pleasant. It is good that Egyptians should hate us, that so they may not hurt us. When the world is most kind, it is most corrupting ; and when it smiles most, it seduceth most. Were it not for the bondage in Egypt, the food and idols of Egypt would be too much beloved. Blessed be God, who will by the former wean us from the latter ; and will not let us have the one without the other : far. better that Egypt should oppress us, than we oppose God. *Jenkyn.*

# Section 82.

## BIRTH AND TRAINING OF MOSES, IN EGYPT AND MIDIAN.

EXODUS 2 : 1-22.

1 AND there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the
2 woman conceived, and bare a son : and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid
3 him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch ; and she put the child therein, and laid it
4 in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done

5 to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river; and her maidens
walked along by the river side; and she saw the ark among the flags, and sent her handmaid
6 to fetch it. And she opened it, and saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she
7 had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister
to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may
8 nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and
9 called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and
nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed
10 it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her
son. And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water.
11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown up, that he went out unto his
brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he saw an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his
12 brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he
13 smote the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And he went out the second day, and, be-
hold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong,
14 Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over
us? thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said,
15 Surely the thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses.
But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down
16 by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water,
17 and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them
18 away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came
19 to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to-day? And they said,
An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and moreover he drew water for
20 us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? why is it that
21 ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with
22 the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bare a son, and he called his
name Gershom: for he said, I have been a sojourner in a strange land.

**1-10.** By the cruel edict which required the Hebrews to cast all their male children into the river Nile, Pharaoh intended to check the growing greatness of a nation whose numbers he began to dread. But God designed it as the occasion of the adoption of Moses by no less a personage than the daughter of the reigning sovereign; and this to the intent that the future leader and lawgiver of the Hebrew people might be educated for his responsible office. E. C. W. ——The decree designed by Pharaoh to inflict the death-blow on Israel's hopes of honor and enlargement, was made to prepare and fashion the living instrument through whom these hopes were soon to be carried forth into victory and fruition. Forced by the very urgency of the danger on the notice of Pharaoh's daughter, and thereafter received under her care and patronage into Pharaoh's house, the child Moses possessed in the highest degree the opportunity of becoming "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and grew up to manhood in the familiar use of every advantage which it was possible for the world at that time to confer. P. F. ——Divine Providence had determined to raise up that man who was to release this oppressed people, and after having seen and intimately known the civil and religious institutions of this famous country was deliberately to reject them, to found a polity on totally different principles, and establish a religion the most opposite to the mysterious polytheism of Egypt; a polity and a religion which were to survive the dynasty of the Pharaohs and the deities of their vast temples, and exercise an unbounded influence on the civil and religious history of the most remote ages. *Milman.*

Everything here is strictly Egyptian; even some of the terms used in the Hebrew are derived from the Egyptian. The papyrus no longer grows below Nubia, but the Egyptian monuments exhibit many such "arks" and boats made of the plant, and similarly prepared. The "flags" were a smaller species of papyrus. A. E. ——The story of Moses reproduces the country and the times. The branches of the Nile were anciently lined with reeds. The papyrus was woven into baskets, mats, and even little boats, which were made water-tight with the resin, or bitumen, in common use for mummy-wrappings. The sanitary customs of the Egyptians united with their religious feeling to recommend bathing in the sacred river; and the monuments show, that, in ancient Egypt, women had much greater freedom than is now accorded them in Oriental countries.

Thus everything is here pictured to the life. J. P. T.

No romance could have been more skilfully framed for the purpose of setting all the affections in play, than this simple and beautiful story—the placing of the babe by the river side—the watching of him by his sister—the approach of Pharaoh's daughter to the spot—the crying of the child and its influence on the sensibilities of a woman's heart—the offer of the sister to call a nurse, and thus the restoration of the babe to its own mother again. In the epistle to the Hebrews this act of Moses' parents is said to have been by faith : and we cannot doubt that all was overruled by the providence of God, even to the very suggestion which prompted the measure they took with their child. Whether they had in any degree the light of a revelation for what they did, they must at least have elt a certain confidence in the protection of Him who is invisible, else they would not have been remarked by the Apostle among the Old Testament worthies who through faith obtained a good report. T. C.

We shall study the history of Moses without *the key* if we overlook the point made by the writer to the Hebrews (11 : 23) : "*By faith* Moses when he was born was hid three months because they saw that he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." Faith in God made them fearless of Egypt's cruel king. It may sometimes happen that profound interest in a babe of apparently rare promise shall run in a very low and selfish channel, suggesting how much he may do to comfort their own hearts, or to build up the glory of their house or of their name ;—but when by a heavenly faith it takes hold of useful work for God, when it prompts to a special consecration of all the possibilities of his future to the kingdom of Christ, it is morally sublime. Such seems to have been the faith of the parents of the child Moses. How their faith prompted ingenious methods of concealment ; how it wrought in harmony with God's wise providence, not only to preserve the life of this consecrated child, but to give him a place in the heart of Pharaoh's daughter, and thus open to his growing mind all the wealth of Egypt's culture and wisdom, we learn somewhat from this story. H. C.

**1. A daughter of Levi.** The idiom which calls even a remote descendant the son or daughter is common to the Old and New Testament, and this passage may be understood to mean that both parents of Moses were of the house and lineage of Levi. Thus the Vulgate renders the verse, "and he took a wife of his own family ;" the LXX. has "a wife of the daughters of Levi."

**2. Bare a son.** Not her firstborn, Aaron and Miriam were older than Moses. The object of the writer is simply to narrate the events which led to the Exodus, and, as usual, he omits to notice what had no direct bearing upon that object. E. H B.

**3. She took for him an ark of bulrushes.** The bulrush is the *papyrus* or paper-reed of the ancients. It grows in marshy places, and was once most abundant on the banks of the Nile ; but now that the river has been opened to commerce it has disappeared, save in a few unfrequented spots. It is described as having "an angular stem from three to six feet high, though occasionally it grows to the height of fourteen feet ; it has no leaves ; the flowers are in very small spikelets, which grow in thread-like, flowering branchlets, which form a bushy crown to each stem." It was used for many purposes by the Egyptians ; for shoes, baskets, vessels of different sorts, and boats ; but it was especially valuable as furnishing the material corresponding to our paper, on which written communications could be made. To obtain this last fibre, the coarse exterior rind was taken off, and then with a needle the thin concentric layers of the inner cuticle, sometimes to the number of twenty in a single plant, were removed. These were afterward joined together with a mixture of flour, paste, and glue ; and a similar layer of strips being laid crosswise in order to strengthen the fabric, the whole sheet was subjected to pressure, dried in the sun, beaten with a mallet, and polished with ivory. When completed and written over, the sheets were united into one, and rolled on a slender wooden cylinder. Thus was formed a book, and the description of the process gives the etymology and primal significance of our own word "volume." W. M. T.

**Laid it in the flags.** The mother of Moses laid the ark *by the river's brink*. She could not have laid it so courageously upon the Nile, if she had not first devoutly laid it upon the care and love of God We are often surprised at the outward calmness of men who are called upon to do unpleasant and most trying deeds ; but could we have seen them in secret we should have known the moral preparation which they underwent before coming out to be seen of men. Be right in the sanctuary, if you would be right in the market-place. Be steadfast in prayer, if you would be calm in affliction. J. P.

**4.** The mother has done her part. The rushes, the slime, and the pitch were her prudent and necessary preparations ; and the great God has been at the same time preparing *h s* materials, and arranging *his* instruments. He causes everything to concur, not by miraculous influence, but by the simple and natural operation of second causes, to bring about the issue designed in his counsels from everlasting. *Bush.*

**5. Daughter of Pharaoh.** God fetches her thither, to deliver the deliverer of his people. His designs go beyond ours. We know not, when we set our foot over our threshold, what he hath to do with us. This event seemed casual to this princess, but predetermined and provided by God, before she was : how wisely and sweetly God brings to pass his own purposes, in our ignorance and regardlessness ! She saw the ark, opens it, finds the child weeping ; his beauty and his tears had God provided for the strong persuasions of mercy. This young and lively oratory prevailed. Her heart is struck with compassion, and yet her tongue could say, " It is a Hebrew child." *Bp. H.*——**6.** The princess " saw the child." That single sentence contains an argument. It was an appeal to the woman's heart. It mattered not that she was a princess, nor that she belonged to the proudest class of the most exclusive nation in the world. Rank, caste, nationality, all melted before the great fact of womanhood. She was a woman, and before her lay an outcast child. F. W. R.

In the fact that the deliverer of Israel from the power of Egypt was himself first delivered by the daughter of the king of Egypt, we find the same interweaving of the history of Israel with that of the Gentiles already observed in the history of Joseph ; and we may now regard it as a law, that the preference shown to Israel when it was selected as the chosen seed on whom the blessings were first bestowed, was to be counterbalanced by the fact that the salvation of Israel could not be fully effected without the intervention of the Gentiles. This was the opinion of *Cyril of Alexandria*, which he expressed in his usual allegorical style by saying : " the daughter of Pharaoh is the community of the Gentiles." *Baum.*——Thereby he meant to illustrate this great truth, which we trace throughout history, that somehow the salvation of Israel was always connected with the instrumentality of the Gentiles. It was so in the history of Joseph and even before that ; and it will continue so till at the last, through their mercy, Israel shall obtain mercy. A. E.

The phrase " special providence" is liable to be misunderstood. The teaching of this book is, not that God overrules some things more than others, but that he is in all alike, and is as really in the falling of a sparrow as the revolution of an empire. God was as truly in the removal of the little ones that were taken away, as he was in the saving of Amram's son ; and there were lessons of love and warning from the one, no less than of love and encouragement from the other. Nay, more, God is in the daily events of our households precisely as he was in those of the family of the tribe of Levi long ago. The births and the bereavements ; the prosperity and the adversity ; the joys and the sorrows of our homes, are all under his supervision. He is girding us when we know it not ; and his plan of our lives, if we will only yield ourselves to his guidance, will one day round itself into completeness and beauty. Every one of us here has as really been preserved from childhood to this hour by the providence of God, as Moses was delivered on the occasion before us. It is not only when one is snatched out of visible danger, that we should speak of God's care. The protection is as real, though we may not be so conscious of it when no danger is seen. W. M. T.

**8. Mother.** So, by a merciful arrangement of God's providence, the mother received her child back again, and kept it with her until its third year, when children were wont to be weaned. *Gerl.*——There is a higher destiny for Jochebed than that she should be merely nurse to her own child, for she is also to become the early guide of him who shall be Israel's guide. Nor will he leave her ere the grand traditions of God's covenant with his friend, of Jacob's death, and Joseph's last command, of Canaan as the land destined for Israel, and of the great deliverance that has been promised for the world, have all been impressed upon his mind. And can we Christians doubt that the relationships of early life must have conduced to bring us where God's hand has afterward conducted us ; that every one of us has his own special destiny, for which, like Moses, we are frequently prepared, though all unconsciously, throughout a series of years ; that even our first impressions, like the later lessons we receive, are all appointed and arranged by higher wisdom than our own ? *Van O.*——The seeds of his world-conquering faith must have been dropped early into his tender mind. This hired Hebrew nurse, permitted to come into the royal palace by some back-way, was indulged this privilege freely, we know not precisely how long ; but let

us presume that the same faith and prayer kept this door open, at least for her occasional visits in his future years. How many testimonies of God's love to the fathers of their nation she dropped into his youthful ear ; how much she told him of God as "the exceeding great reward" of his believing people ; how well she put the contrast between "the treasures of Egypt" and the treasures laid up for God's then persecuted people :—these points are rather left to our inference than definitely stated ; but we may be very sure that the faith of Moses took hold of these grand truths of then extant revelation ; fixed its hold early ; and held fast through all his future life. H. C.

**He became her son.** Her adopted son. Accordingly she gave him a princely education ; and caused him to be instructed "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7 : 22). *Bp. Patrick.*——Thus did he find an asylum in the very palace of his intended destroyer ; while his intercourse with his own family and nation was still most naturally maintained. And while he was instructed "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and bred up in the midst of a luxurious court, he acquired the knowledge of the promised *Redemption* of Israel : and, "by faith in the Redeemer Christ," refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. *Hales.*

Those whom God designs for great services, he finds out ways to qualify and prepare beforehand. Moses, by having his education in a *court*, is the fitter to be a prince and *king in Jeshurun ;* by having his education in a *learned* court (for such the Egyptian then was), is the fitter to be an *historian ;* and by having his education in the court of Egypt, is the fitter to be employed, in the name of God, as an ambassador to that court. H.——The adopted son of the daughter of an Egyptian king *must* have been trained in all the wisdom of Egypt. This is also in harmony with the tradition reported by *Manetho*, which makes Moses a priest of Heliopolis, and therefore presupposes a priestly education. It was precisely this education in the wisdom of the Egyptians, which was the ultimate design of God in all the leadings of his providence, not only with reference to the boy, but, we might say, to the whole of Israel. For it was in order to appropriate the wisdom and culture of Egypt, and to take possession of them as a human basis for divine instruction and direction, that Jacob's family left the land of their fathers' pilgrimage, and their descendants' hope and promise. But the guidance and fate of the whole of Israel were at this time concentrated in Moses. "As Joseph's elevation to the post of grand-vizier of Egypt placed him in a position to provide for his father's house in the time of famine, so was Moses fitted by the Egyptian training received at Pharaoh's court to become the leader and lawgiver of his people." (*Baum.*)——There can be no doubt that the foster-son of the king's daughter, the highly-gifted and well-educated youth, had the most brilliant course open before him in the Egyptian state. Had he desired it, he would most likely have been able to rise like Joseph to the highest honors. But affairs were very different now. Moses could not enter on such a course as this without sacrificing his nation, his convictions, his hopes, his faith, and his vocation. But that he neither would, nor durst, nor could. And hence it is with perfect truth that the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, when tracing the course of the history, says (ch. 11 : 24–26) : "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt ; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." K.

Faith breaks the force of opposite propensities and attractions. If the world stand in the way of duty, "faith overcometh the world :" partly by bringing Christ into the combat for us, partly by spiritual replies and arguments. Reason urges "we must be for ourselves ;" Faith tells us "we must be for God." Reason says, "If I take this course I shall undo myself ;" Faith, by looking within the veil, declares it is the only way to be saved. Reason presents the treasures of Egypt, Faith the recompense of reward. *Manton.*——It is not a question of rationality, as between the conduct of the Christian and other men. It is a question, rather, as to the relative value of the things which he gives up and those which he is seeking to attain. Moses thought the reproach of Christ was greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. If he was right in so thinking, his choice was every way rational. But was he right? Let the nobleness of his character, the influence of his writings, and, more especially, his appearance in glory by the side of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, answer. He *was* right in his estimate ; he *was* justified in acting on it ; and this decision was the first step in that ascending ladder of which the other rounds were Horeb, Sinai, Pisgah, Heaven. W. M. T.

"Christ" is the Greek word corresponding to the Hebrew "Messiah." If we inquire whether

the Hebrews in the age of Moses knew of a promised Messiah, we answer in the affirmative. Indeed it may be assumed and defended that they knew far more than the current opinion of this nineteenth century gives them credit for. To Abraham, God gave new forms of Messianic promise. The lips of the dying Jacob made yet another fresh addition under the name "Shiloh," who should "*come*" (Gen. 49 : 10). We have seen that a wealth of promise lay garnered in the *birthright* of the sons in Abraham's line. A promised Messiah was no inconsiderable element of that wealth. At this late hour of the Christian centuries men are beginning to learn that "all the wisdom of Egypt" had a larger significance than had been dreamed of for ages, and that it behooves us to be more reserved in fixing limitations upon the extent of their knowledge. The idea of a divine incarnation—some form of God, taking upon himself human flesh—has been current ever since the world began, wherever human thought has reached any considerable culture ; and it seems more philosophical to find the origin of this idea in the fact of revealed promise than in the fancy of uninspired minds. H. C.

**11–15.** Moses records no incident of his life during the following years. His object, as Ranke observes, was not to write his own biography, but to describe God's dealings with his people. Later tradition would have been full of details. At the end of 40 years, when, according to Stephen, Moses visited his brethren, the princess was probably dead, as Syncellus relates, and the events which follow took place under another Pharaoh. *Cook.*

We have three co-ordinate narratives of the early years of Moses ; that given in Heb. 11: 24–27, very brief, and touching only its specially religious side ; while that of Stephen (Acts 7 : 20–29) is full, even somewhat more full than the narrative here. Particularly Stephen adds that Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in words and in deeds"—a man like Joseph of immense efficiency :—also that he was "full forty years old" when it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel—a statement which shows that he distinctly recognized this relationship of brethren. Seeing a brother Hebrew abused by an Egyptian he interposed, smote the Egyptian dead, and buried him in the sand. Stephen's words suggest that this was not merely one of those quick, spontaneous impulses felt by noble souls in view of outrageous wrong, but was a first step toward a contemplated career of interposed force for the rescue of his people from their oppression. "For he supposed *his brethren* would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them ; but they understood not" (Acts 7 : 25). H. C.——The attachment to his own people and to their God must have accompanied him throughout and have matured his final resolve. Even so we may infer had his patriotism been growing and coming to a head, before the incident here related could have taken place. As Stephen shows, he must have in his mind matured his view of himself as the future deliverer and judge of Israel, before he undertook thus first to deliver and then to judge between his brethren. Faith was throughout his guiding principle, dependence on his divine mission, and on God, who called him to it. Observe the stress laid on the word his brethren. It was this feeling which was uppermost in his mind, the tie which bound him to Israel, and his mission of deliverance. *Alf.*

Oppressions may not be righted by violence, but by law. The redress of evil by a person unwarranted, is evil. Moses knew that God had called him ; he knew that Pharaoh knew it not : therefore he hides the Egyptian in the sand. Those actions which may be approved unto God are not always safe with men ; as contrarily, too many things go current with men, which are not approved of God. *Bp. H.*——While we cannot approve of the rashness of Moses, we must admire his decision ; for now he fully and conclusively gave up all the advantages of an Egyptian prince, and cast in his lot with the people of God. W. M. T.——By his "refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," we are to understand that he *positively declined* all the honor and aggrandizement implied in that relation. This was his deliberate choice, and no man was ever called to make a choice under circumstances more trying, or made one which redounded more to his credit. It is to be remembered that Moses was at this time of mature age, "full forty years old," says Stephen. It was a decision formed under circumstances in which *deep principle* must have been the ruling motive ; for while in a worldly sense he had nothing to hope from a transfer of himself, he had everything to lose. *Bush.*

**13, 14.** The same fire of patriotism which thus roused him as a deliverer from the oppressors, turns him into the peacemaker of the oppressed It is characteristic of the faithfulness of the Sacred records that his flight is occasioned rather by the malignity of his countrymen than by the enmity of the Egyptians. And in Stephen's speech it is this part of the story

which is drawn out at greater length than in the original, evidently with the view of showing the identity of the narrow spirit which had thus displayed itself equally against their first and the last Deliverer. A. P. S.

**15. Sought to slay Moses.** This was perhaps not so much with a view to avenge the death of a single individual of the Egyptian race, as because Moses had by this act discovered himself to be a friend and favorer of the oppressed Israelites, and given the king reason to suspect that he was secretly cherishing the purpose of one day attempting to effect their liberation His only safety therefore was in flight. *Bush.*

**Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh.** Though he could satisfy his own conscience in having killed the Egyptian, yet he had not received a commission from God to act publicly as the deliverer of the Israelites, and so could not justify his action to Pharaoh : nor had he reason to expect that God would protect him in an extraordinary manner since his safety could be provided for by ordinary means ; namely, by withdrawing from Egypt. *Dr. Wells.*

The time for deliverance was not yet come. The Israelites as a whole were not sufficiently prepared for it ; and Moses himself also was far from being ready for his peculiar task. Before he was qualified to take the government of such a people, and be a fit instrument for executing his difficult and complicated part, he needed to have trial of an altogether different kind of life ; amid the desolation and solitudes of the desert to become habituated to solemn converse with God, and formed to the requisite gravity, meekness, patience, and subduedness of spirit. Thus God overruled his rash interference with the affairs of his kindred to the proper completion of his own preparatory training, and provided for him the advantage of as long a sojourn in the wilderness to learn divine wisdom, as he had already spent in learning human wisdom in Egypt. P. F.

**15.** Midian was the son of Abraham, and half-brother of Isaac. The Midianites were, therefore, the kinsfolk of Moses. A great part of Arabia, indeed, was occupied with descendants of Heber, the ancestor of Abraham and the Israelites. Thither it was natural for Moses to flee. M.——We should look for the settlements of this tribe of Midianites somewhere to the east or north-east of Sinai, but still on the western side of the gulf. But we must at all events regard the Midianitish tribe of which Reuel was the head as a nomadic branch, which had separated from the main body of the nation, and never united with the rest again ; for while the great mass of the Midianites always maintained a hostile position toward Israel, the descendants of Reuel continued friendly to the last. K.

**18. Reuel their father.** The name of the priest of Midian was Jethro (ch. 3 : 1) : so that either Reuel was his name as well as Jethro ; or else Reuel was the father of Jethro, and grandfather of these young women. *Bp. Patrick.*——It appears probable that Reuel was the grandfather, Jethro the father, and Hobab the brother, of Zipporah. Hence, after forty years, Reuel is no more spoken of. *Walter.*——Reuel, here called "father," was the grandfather, and probably the hereditary office of the priesthood was exercised by Jethro in conjunction with his father ; or, perhaps, before the events mentioned (ch. 3), Reuel was dead and Jethro had succeeded to his office. *Gerl.*——The treatment of Jethro and Hobab by Moses perfectly accords with the above view, which recognizes the former as his father-in-law, and the latter as his brother-in-law. B.

**18-20.** Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, is described in general terms as the priest and prince of Midian—combines in himself, therefore, both sacerdotal and royal functions. More particularly, he is the chief of the Kenites, a clan of the vast tribe of Midian, dwelling on the shores of the Gulf of Akaba. He is the very type of the Arab chief, such as he remains to the present day. His numerous flocks feed round the well of Midian, tended by the seven daughters for whom, when the rough shepherds would have driven them from the well, Moses stood up. He is very grateful to "the Egyptian" who "delivered his daughters out of the hand of the shepherds, and drew water, and watered their flocks." He treats him with the princely hospitality and courtesy which are still to be found in the Arabian tents, and gives him one of the seven daughters to wife. *Cox.*

**21. Was content to dwell with the man.** This conveys the true sense of the Hebrew. It implies that Moses recognized in Reuel a man in whom he could confide ; and in his family a fitting home. So quietly, and yet so impressively, Moses records the entrance upon a long period, extending over forty years of mature life. *Cook.*

**21. He gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.** The sacred authors do not relate all the particulars of a story, but such only as are material. We may therefore suppose that a great many things intervened between Moses'

entrance into Jethro's family, and his marriage to his daughter; especially considering that his children were so young at his return into Egypt after an absence of forty years. *Stackhouse.*

Moses was certainly not yet ripe for the arduous contests which awaited him; having been brought up in the Court, he was not prepared for the great and continual anxieties of which the sequel of the history will show him the conqueror. Therefore God withdrew him that He might gradually render him fit and equal to undertake so difficult a task. For the experience of forty years in a laborious and ascetic mode of life did not a little avail to prepare him for enduring any hardships; so that the Desert may well be called the school in which he was taught, until he was invited to his more difficult charge. *Calv.*——Egypt accomplished him for a scholar, a statesman, a soldier, all which accomplishments would be afterward of use to him; but yet lacketh he one thing. He that was to do all by divine revelation, must know, by a long experience, what it was to live a life of communion with God; and in this he would be greatly furthered by the solitude and retirement of a shepherd's life in Midian. By the former he was prepared to rule in Jeshurun, but by the latter he was prepared to converse with God in Mount Horeb, near which mount he had spent much of his time. Those that know what it is to be alone with God in holy exercises, are acquainted with better delights than ever Moses tasted in the court of Pharaoh. H.——It is in solitude that the heroic soul must be matured for its grand destiny; God's friends are always formed in such a way. It is just in the stillness of that same Arabian desert that Paul ripens into the Moses of the New Covenant, whose it shall be to lead out Christianity from the hard bondage of the law. The training-time of Moses is a long one,—just as long as his life-task. But that which is most excellent, both in the natural and moral world, is always slowest in attaining full maturity. *Respectful silence, careful choice, complete obedience,* - such are the leading lessons taught by his experience in his training-time. *Van O.*

Little did Moses dream that in the very practice of this art of waiting he was preparing for a life the reverse of asceticism. While through these forty years "he endured as seeing him who is invisible, he imagined that he was being trained for separation from the world; in truth, he was being trained for life in the world, not the life of the world-worshipper, but the career of the world-reformer. *Endurance* was to be, indeed, the very key-note of his destiny. His life was to be one long waiting, only not the waiting for an invisible but for a visible glory, the glory of God *in* the world. In the wilderness of Midian he was enduring silence, solitude, the sense of spiritual elevation above the brotherhood of humanity. But the object which God was preparing him to endure was the brotherhood of humanity itself; this, and not the study of the invisible, was the yoke which was to try his meekness; it was for this he was being exercised in the long practice of waiting. *Matheson.*

## Section 83.

### CALL AND COMMISSION OF MOSES, AT THE BURNING BUSH ON HOREB.

Exodus 2 : 23–25 ; 3 : 1–22 ; 4 : 1–17.

: 23 And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died : and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came
24 up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God re-
25 membered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge *of them.*

3 : 1 Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian : and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto
2 Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush : and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not
3 consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush

4 is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him
5 out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he
said, Draw not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon
6 thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of
Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face ; for he was
7 afraid to look upon God. And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my
people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters ; for
8 I know their sorrows ; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyp-
tians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land
flowing with milk and honey ; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the
9 Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry
of the children of Israel is come unto me : moreover I have seen the oppression where-
10 with the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto
Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.
11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should
12 bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with
thee ; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee : when thou hast
13 brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses
said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them,
The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say to me, What is his
14 name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM : and he
15 said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And
God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The
LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of
Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto
16 all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The
LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared
unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt :
17 and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the
Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the
18 Jebusite, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice :
and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall
say unto him, The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, hath met with us : and now let us go,
we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD
19 our God. And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, no, not by a
20 mighty hand. And I will put forth my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which
21 I will do in the midst thereof : and after that he will let you go. And I will give this
people favour in the sight of the Egyptians : and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go,
22 ye shall not go empty : but every woman shall ask of her neighbour, and of her that
sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment : and ye shall
put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters ; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.
4 : 1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto
2 my voice : for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said
3 unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on
the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent ; and Moses fled from
4 before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail :
5 (and he put forth his hand, and laid hold of it, and it became a rod in his hand :) that
they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God
6 of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. And the LORD said further-
more unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his
7 bosom : and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as *white as* snow. And
he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. (And he put his hand into his bosom again ;
and when he took it out of his bosom, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.)
8 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the
9 first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass,
if they will not believe even these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou
shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land : and the water which

10 thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land. And Moses said unto
the LORD, Oh Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto
11 thy servant: for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the LORD said unto him,
Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh *a man* dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind?
12 is it not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee
13 what thou shalt speak. And he said, Oh Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him
14 whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he
said, Is there not Aaron thy brother the Levite? I know that he can speak well And
also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in
15 his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put the words in his mouth: and I will
16 be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he
shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to
17 thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God. And thou shalt take in thine hand this
rod, wherewith thou shalt do the signs.

**2 : 24, 25.** The whole history of Israel is foreshadowed in these words. The accumulation of so-called anthropomorphic terms in this passage is remarkable. God *heard, remembered, looked upon*, and *knew them*. It evidently indicates the beginning of a crisis marked by a personal intervention of God. *Cook.*——**God heard.** The name of God is here emphatically prefixed to four different expressions of a kind intention toward them. **Their groaning.** He took notice of their complaints. The groans of the oppressed cry loud in the ears of the righteous God, to whom vengeance belongs; especially the groans of God's spiritual Israel. **God remembered his covenant.** Which he seemed to have forgotten, but of which he is ever mindful. **God looked upon the children of Israel.** *Moses* looked upon them and pitied them (v. 11); but now *God* looked upon them and helped them. **God had respect unto them.** A favorable respect unto them as his own. Now we are to expect something great. *Opus Deo dignum—A work worthy of God.* His eyes which run to and fro through the earth, are now fixed upon Israel, to show himself strong, to show himself a God in their behalf. H.

*God heard their groaning.* He hears all groanings. He also remembered his covenant with their fathers. He not only heard, but saw the sons of Israel under the oppressor. He not only observed with the outward senses, but knew with the inward mind, *took knowledge*, and acknowledged them to be the seed of the covenant. Such is the manner in which the narrator lays emphasis on the earnest attention with which the Lord regards the affliction of his people. M.——The *bondage* of the Israelites was wisely permitted, that they might with less reluctance leave a country where they had suffered the greatest oppression and indignities. Had they not suffered severely, no inducements could have been sufficient to have prevailed on them to leave it. And yet their leaving it was of infinite consequence in the order both of grace and providence, as it was indispensably necessary that they should be a people separated from all the rest of the world, that they might see the promises of God fulfilled under their own eyes, and thus have the fullest persuasion that their law was divine, their prophets inspired by the Most High, and that the Messiah came according to the prophecies before delivered concerning him. A. C.

**Ch. 3:** Forty years were spent by Moses in the land of Midian. To Moses it was the middle period of life, ordinarily the period of strongest action, of sternest realities. Yet this was the period in which he lived in seclusion and quiet, preferring the humble duties of pastoral life. He married; he had two sons; he led his flock to the pastures and the waters. These few acts form, as far as regards him, the history of that period of life which is to other men the time of the most vehement action. *Kit.*——A mind so active as that of Moses could not want occupation these forty years. It would be employed partly in devotional thoughts, in communing with that God whose works he now beheld; and partly in digesting the learning, and the knowledge of the ways and workings of mankind acquired in Egypt, and in considering how these might be turned to practical account. Unconsciously to himself, Moses would thus be preparing for the arduous task of judging and governing his people, when he should have led them out of Egypt. W. G. B.

The years of the life of Moses are remarkably divided into three forties; the first forty he spent as a prince in Pharaoh's court, the second a shepherd in Midian, the third a king in Jeshurun. He had now finished the second forty, when he received his commission to bring Israel out of Egypt. Sometimes it is long before God

calls his servants out to that work which he designed them for, and has been graciously preparing them for. Moses was born to be Israel's deliverer, and yet not a word is said of it to him till he is eighty years of age. H.

**3 : 1.** Of the second forty-year period in the life of Moses, little is reported save its first scenes and its last. This verse opens the latter. Moses is keeping the flock of his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. He has "led them to the back side of the desert"—*i.e.* to the west side of it, for in designating the points of compass the Hebrews always turned the face toward the east. The east is in front—*before;* and of course the west is behind. Horeb and Sinai lay on the western margin of the great Arabian desert. H. C.——The peninsula of Sinai is about 150 miles in greatest breadth, and in greatest length 200. Its more northern part is hilly, rather than mountainous; but toward the southern angle the mountains are crowded together with bewildering profusion; and some of them rise to the height of 9000 feet. The two great characteristics of the region are,—majesty and desolation. W. G. B.

**The mountain of God, Horeb.** A proof that the call of Moses took place on the very same spot which was afterward to be the scene of the calling of the people, the conclusion of the covenant, and the giving of the law. Even now it was holy ground; so that when Israel departed from Egypt to offer sacrifice to the Lord in the desert, they had a definite spot in view and one which had been already appointed by God. K.

The southern end of the peninsula of Sinai consists of a confused mass of peaks, some of dark green porphyry, but mostly red granite of different hues, broken by strips of sand or gravel, intersected by wádies or glens, which are the beds of winter torrents, and dotted here and there with green spots, chiefly due to perennial fountains. The great central group among these mountains is that of *Horeb*, and one special height in it Sinai, the "*mount of God.*" Here amid this awful desolateness the most fertile places in "the wilderness" are found. Even in our days part of this plateau is quite green. Fruit-trees grow in rich luxuriance in its valleys, and "the neighborhood is the best watered in the whole peninsula, running streams being found in no less than four of the adjacent valleys." It was thither that Moses, probably in the early summer, drove Reuel's flock for pasturage and water. Behind him, to the east, lay the desert; before him rose in awful grandeur the mountain of God. The stillness of this place is unbroken; its desolateness only relieved by the variety of coloring in the dark green or the red mountain peaks. **2, 3.** All at once truly a "strange sight" presented itself. On a solitary crag, or in some sequestered valley, one of those spiked, guarled, thorny acacia trees, which form so conspicuous a feature in the wádies of "the desert," of which indeed they are "the only timber tree of any size," stood enwrapped in fire, and yet "the bush was not consumed." At view of this, Moses turned aside "to see this great sight." A. E.

**Not consumed.** The fire which lights up but does not consume points, on the one hand, to the tribulations which then visited the people of Israel; on the other hand, light and fire are constant emblems of the Divine glory. The figures combined represent that the affliction is sent from God; that by means of it God will reveal himself to his people, but not consume them. The emblem of the Scottish Church is a burning bush, with the words, "nec tamen consumebatur," "and yet was not consumed." *Gerl.*

From this time the chosen people of God are frequently and variously referred to under the figure of a bush or tree. The FIRE is always used in the Scriptures as a symbol of divine holiness. And this is the case here; for the record expressly says that the presence of God was made known in the fire: "the *angel of the Lord* appeared to him *in* the flame of fire out of the midst of a bush;" God spake "out of the midst of the bush;" Moses had to take off his shoes, because the place on which he stood was rendered *holy* by this appearance; he "hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon *God.*" The burning brier, therefore, was a symbol of the community of God, in which the holiness of God had its abode. The brier was in the fire, and it was a miracle that it was not consumed. And thus was it also a miracle of mercy, that the holiness of God could dwell in a sinful community without consuming it. There was also another fact of great importance represented by this symbol, viz., that the fire of divine holiness, which burned in Israel without consuming it, served also as an outward defence. "I will be unto her a *wall of fire round about,*" said the Lord by the prophet Zechariah (2 : 4), "and will show my glory *in the midst of her.*" Pharaoh was soon to find this out. K.

**5, 6.** That the angel here spoken of was no created being is plain from the whole context, and especially from his saying, "I am the Lord God, the Jehovah." No angel, without blas-

phemy, could take these titles; and since neither God the Father nor God the Holy Ghost is called an angel, that is, a messenger; whereas God the Son is called "the Angel of the Covenant" (Mal. 3 : 1), it seems to follow that this was God the Son, who might properly be called an Angel because, in the fulness of time, he was to be sent into the world in our flesh as a messenger from God. *Stackhouse.* ——The ancient teachers of the Church have rightly understood that the Eternal Son of God is so called in respect to his office as Mediator, which he figuratively bore from the beginning, although he really took it upon him only at his Incarnation. And Paul expounds this mystery to us when he plainly asserts that Christ was the leader of his people in the Desert (1 Cor. 10 : 4). Nor had the saints ever any communication with God except through the promised Mediator It is not then to be wondered at if the Eternal Word of God, of one Godhead and essence with the Father, assumed the name of "the Angel" on the ground of his future mission. *Calv.*——That the Messiah, the Angel of the Covenant, was present with the Church of the Fathers, and that his upholding power was manifested in miraculous interferences for their welfare, was a truth acknowledged no less by the Jew than by the Christian. *Alf.*

**5. Holy ground.** The place was holy by reason of God's special presence and of his intention to select it in the future as the spot for proclaiming his holy law. But the soles of Moses' sandals had come into contact with much that was polluted, and were too impure to tread upon consecrated ground. In thus commanding, God speaks not of a holiness belonging to the spot which lay in his own mind, but accommodates himself to the apprehension of the finite mind. To a creature like man one spot might be more holy than another, because it suggested to his thoughts some special manifestation of the divine presence; and Moses, in order to show his sense of this holiness or his reverence for God, might with reason be called upon to perform a symbolical act which was suited to the genius of the age, was the natural language of the sentiment, and without which the sentiment would be chilled or stifled. *Woolsey.*

**6. Hid his face.** The respect due from the feet to the clean place, represented the reverence with which the inward man should approach the Holy One. As soon as Moses perceived that God was in the fire, he *hid his face;* a sinful man cannot look openly and freely at the self-revealing holiness of God, and therefore he shuts or hides his eyes. K.——This was his first meeting with God; further acquaintance makes him familiar, and familiarity makes him bold. frequence of conversation gives us freedom of access to God; and makes us pour out our hearts to him, as fully and as fearlessly as to our friends. But now at first he made not so much haste to see as to hide his eyes. And if Moses cannot abide to look upon God's glory when he descends to us in mercy, how shall wicked ones abide to see his fearful presence when he sets upon vengeance! In this fire he flamed, and consumed not, but in his revenge "our God is a consuming fire." *Bp. H.*

The signs of God's presence do not now force themselves upon our eyes; so that we may, if we choose, walk on our own way, without turning aside to see and observe them. And thus we do not see God, and do not, therefore, hide our faces for fear of him, but go on, and feel no fear, till the time when we cannot help seeing him. And it may be, that this time will never come till our life, and with it our space of trial, is gone forever. Here, then, is our state, that God will manifest himself no more to us in such a way as that we cannot help seeing him. The burning bush will be no more given us as a sign; Christ will no more manifest himself unto the world. And yet, unless we do see him, unless we learn to fear him while he is yet an unconsuming fire, unless we know that he is near and that the place whereon we stand is holy ground, we shall most certainly see him when he will be a consuming fire, and when we shall join in crying to the mountains to fall on us, and to the hills to cover us.

Every person who thinks at all must be satisfied that our great want, the great need of our condition, is this one thing—to realize to ourselves the presence of God. Thoughtfulness, in one sense, is indeed likely to come with advancing years: we are more apt to think at forty than at fifteen; but it by no means follows that we are more apt to think about God. In this matter we are nearly at a level at all times of our life: it is with all of us our one great want, to bring the idea of God, with a living and abiding power, home to our minds. *Arnold.*

**6. I am the God of thy father.** In this, the first revelation that had been made for 400 years, God announced himself as the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* All that God had effected and promised during the first stage of the covenant, was summed up in the name, "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." This name was now inscribed on the portal of

the further historical development of the covenant (in the form of a nation), and it continued to be the seal of that covenant, till the Old Testament expanded into the New, till the covenant with one nation gave place to the covenant with all, and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob became the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; until the time arrived in which the new Israel found in Christ the author and finisher of faith, and in the Spirit of God the fountain of life. K.——Those favored men of old were happy in being permitted to enjoy such immediate intercourse with God ; but happier we who enjoy the full revelation of the gospel. Whatever the promises given to them, we are in possession of better. Whatever the covenant made with the fathers, a better one has been established with us, their spiritual descendants. Whatever the encouragement granted to them, we have still greater afforded to us in every part of the work which we have to do, in every trial and danger to which we may be exposed. We do not now draw nigh unto a burning bush or a flaming mount, but to a mercy-seat to which we are commanded to come with filial boldness to obtain all needed grace. *Bush.*

God doth not say, "I *was* the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob ;" but, "I *am.*" The patriarchs still live, after so many thousand years of dissolution. No length of time can separate the souls of the just from their Maker. *Bp. H.* ——For God to be one's God necessarily implies a present relation that God hath to him ; and no relation can continue when either of the parties ceases and is taken away ; whence it clearly follows that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were alive, and did subsist (that is, in their spirits) when God spake these words to Moses, that is, many ages after the death of their bodies. *Bp. Bull.*——According to the authoritative interpretation of our Saviour, the doctrine not only of a future life, but even of a resurrection from the dead, is taught in this passage. It must therefore be regarded as containing something more than a mere hint of another life. It is a distinct revelation of it. E. C. W.——God calls himself the "God of Abraham ;" and Christ tells us (Luke 20 : 37) that in this simple announcement was contained the promise that Abraham should rise again from the dead. God did not say the God of Abraham's soul, but simply of *Abraham.* He blessed Abraham, and he gave him eternal life ; not to his soul only without his body, but to Abraham as one man. *Newman.*

When Jesus argues from the fact that God calls himself the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, that the patriarchs and their true seed shall rise again, because God is not a God of the dead but of the living (Matt. 22 : 31), we may all the more certainly conclude that these men during their earthly life were in communion with God, and must have attained to a high degree of faith. God would not otherwise have taken them into his august title—as it were, into his own name. With this name which God gives himself, the Mosaic revelation properly begins. And it is thus expressly and fundamentally connected with the Patriarchal. Even Ewald admits there is a connection between the religion of these great patriarchs and Mosaism. "Among all the reminiscences, even the oldest, of the Mosaic religion," he says now, "none stand more sure than this, that the God to the worship of whom Moses summoned the people is the same God who was once the God of the fathers, different from the gods of the other nations, but essentially the same that the great ancestors of this one people worshipped.' *Auberlen.*

**11. Who am I?** These words indicate humility, not fear. Among the grounds which he alleges for his hesitation, in no instance is there any allusion to personal danger ; what he feared was failure owing to incompetency, especially in the power of expression. This shrinking from self-assertion is the quality which seems to be specially intimated by the word rendered "meek" in Numbers 12 : 3. *Cook.*

Why did God select Moses to be the lawgiver and guide of his people during their forty years' pilgrimage? Why did he confer on one man, for nearly half a century, powers almost absolute? Not because the Levite was slow of speech ; not because he was a meek man, any further than his meekness was a qualification for his work. Moses was *learned* in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as well as in that practical experience which he had acquired in his long sojourn in the deserts of Arabia. A man was demanded for the service, of great powers of mind, ready to meet emergencies, whose acknowledged talents would overawe the fractious multitude, whose clear intellect, co-operating with the Divine teaching, could frame a wise system of laws, and also enable him to act as the only historian of the world for almost one half of its duration thus far. God did not alight upon Moses by accident. He *selected* him as probably the only man in the nation competent to the work. Again, why were the principal writers of the Old Testament taken from

the most intelligent men of their times, some of them priests, who were required to be educated? Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the writer of the book of Job, considered merely in an intellectual point of view, would have been the glory of any age. B. B. E.

**13. What is his name?** The meaning of this question is evidently: By which name shall I tell them the promise is confirmed? Each name of the Deity represented some aspect or manifestation of his attributes. El, Elohim, or Shaddai would speak of majesty or might. What Moses needed was not a new name, but direction to use that Name which would bear in itself a pledge of accomplishment. *Cook.*

**14, 15.** It is clear from the whole interview at which Moses received his commission, that the difficulties and discouragements which pressed most upon his mind were those connected with the sunk and degenerate condition of the covenant people themselves, who appeared to have lost heart in regard to the promise of the covenant, and even to have become well-nigh estranged from the God of their fathers. His concern on the latter point led him to ask what he should say to them when they inquired for the name of the God of their fathers, at whose command he was to go to them. His question was met with the sublime reply, "I AM THAT I AM: thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, JEHOVAH, the God of your fathers. the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." P. F.

I AM THAT I AM. The margin of the Revised Old Testament reads thus: "Or, I AM, BECAUSE I AM; or, I AM WHO I AM; or, I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE." What Moses needed to sustain him in his great commission and also to encourage the people was a deeper and more intimate knowledge of the true name and character of the God of their fathers. What they needed was a firm hold on the Divine perfections; and to this the message corresponds. It is grand, simple, majestic, worthy of the living God to reveal, and to place as the very foundation of his written messages of truth and holiness. *Birks.*

The word "I AM" in Hebrew is equivalent in meaning to JEHOVAH, and differs from it very slightly in form. This is much obscured by our substitution of LORD for JEHOVAH. The name, which Moses was thus commissioned to use, was at once new and old; old in its connection with previous revelations; new in its full interpretation, and in its bearing upon the covenant of which Moses was the destined mediator. *Cook.*

**My name forever.** This name is to be the enduring appellation of God to the Jewish people. The Jews do not, and have not for ages, pronounced this name, and the very vowels with which it is to be enunciated are matter of dispute, having been lost and replaced by others from the word Adonai, Lord, which they use instead of this name. Our English version, by following that example, has occasioned much confusion and loss of force in passages like the present, where it is of importance. Observe, that this saying of God to Moses stamps for all ages the Unity and Personality of God as the centre of belief respecting him. *Alf.*

This name asserts the self-existence, the eternity, and immutability of the Deity. Only God can say I Am. His creatures are not, except as he gives them life and keeps them living. We are what God has made us, what he enables us to be. He is that he is, the only self-existing, self-upholding Being, God over all and in all. I Am expresses also the eternity of the Godhead—that was, and is, and is to come. Past and future are included in this name; or, rather, there can be no past nor future in respect of God. His years are not spent, as ours are, like a tale that is told. In his existence there is neither beginning nor end; nothing transitory or successive; nothing bygone or to come. Before his sight all things, past, present, and to come, are constantly outspread. God "inhabiteth eternity:" as he fills all space and is everywhere present, so he fills all time, not passing through it, but dwelling in every part of it. Before all worlds he Is; now while we speak of him he Is; and hereafter, in that eternity on which we all shall enter, he already Is. By this name the immutability of the Godhead likewise is declared, "I Am that I Am." What God is now he has always been, and always will be. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Change is a consequence of imperfection. God can never be greater or less than he is. I Am includes all that God can be. It sums up all the attributes of perfectness; it is the standard from which there can be no departure and no change. *T. S. Millington.*

The God of the Bible is no sterile abstraction; he is the one God at the present time as in the origin of all things, the personal God, living,

acting, and presiding efficiently over the destinies of the world that he has created. The God of the Bible has no biography, neither has he any personal adventures. Nothing occurs to him, and nothing changes in him ; he is always and invariably the same, a Being real and personal, absolutely distinct from the finite world and from humanity, identical and immutable in the bosom of the universal diversity and movement. "I Am That I Am," is the sole definition that he vouchsafes of himself, and the constant expression of what he is in all the course of the history of the Hebrews, to which he is present and over which he presides without ever receiving from it any reflex of influence. Such is the God of the Bible, in evident and permanent contrast with all the gods of polytheism, still more distinct and more solitary by his nature than by his Unity. Amid all the vicissitudes and errors of the people of the Bible, the God of the Bible remains invariably the same, without any alteration in the idea which the Hebrews conceive of his nature, either during their fidelity or disobedience to his Commandments. It is always the God who has said, "I Am That I Am," of whom his people demand no other explanation of himself, and who, ever present and sovereign, pursues the designs of his providence with men, who either use or abuse the liberty of action which that God had accorded to them at their creation. *Guizot.*

"Jesus said to the Jews, Before Abraham was, *I am.*" In these tremendous words the speaker institutes a double contrast, in respect both of the duration and of the mode of his existence, between himself and the great ancestor of Israel. Abraham had come into existence at a given point of time. He did not exist until his parents gave him birth. But, *I am.* Here is simple existence, with no note of beginning or end. He claims pre-existence, but not merely pre-existence ; he unveils a consciousness of eternal Being. He speaks as one on whom time has no effect and for whom it has no meaning. He is the I AM of ancient Israel ; he knows no past as he knows no future ; he is unbeginning, unending Being ; he is the eternal "Now." This is the plain sense of his language. H. P. L.——We know not how to resist the conclusion that there was a real identity in the essential nature of the two speakers, so that whatever was meant by Jehovah in saying to Moses, "I Am hath sent me to you," the same was meant by the saying of Jesus, "Before Abraham was, I Am " And thus the Jews would appear to have understood it, for they immediately took up stones to cast at him, as being guilty of the highest blasphemy in thus appropriating to himself the incommunicable name of God.

**15. This is my memorial unto all generations.** The name or character by which I will be remembered, celebrated, and invoked in all time to come. Accordingly, in allusion to this declaration, we have Hos. 12 : 5, "Even the Lord (Jehovah) God of Hosts ; the Lord (Jehovah) is his *memorial.*" Ps. 135, "Thy name, O Lord (Jehovah), endureth forever ; and thy *memorial*, O Lord (Jehovah), unto all generations." The words were evidently adapted, as they were intended, to bring the chosen people to a devout recognition of God as emphatically and pre-eminently the God of their race, and to wake up to more lively actings that faith which had become dormant under the pressure of long-continued affliction. Their protracted bondage, though it had not utterly extinguished the light of the great truth respecting the divine Being and his perfections, yet had no doubt very much obscured it. They had lost the practical sense of their covenant relation to Jehovah. *Bush.*

The vision of Horeb was the birth-hour of the Jewish nation. Out of the lurid flame there flashed before the eyes of the future lawgiver the spectacle of a kingdom of God on earth. That spectacle was Judea's pillar of fire. Through the long night of her national history it led her people on. It conducted them over the desert and through the waters of Jordan. It lighted them to the possession of the throne of David. It pointed them to the hope of a higher throne than David's,—the Messianic empire of the world. It was the light that illumined all hearts ; it was the vision of the king, of the priest, and of the prophet ; bequeathed from spiritual sire to son until it found at once its culmination and its new beginning in the visible embodiment of him who was the prophet like unto Moses. Judea has passed away, but the vision has not faded : we still look for the church in the world. *G. Matheson.*

**18. Three days' journey.** A journey which would occupy three days in going and returning. The request which the Israelites were instructed to make was therefore most probably not a permission to go beyond the frontier, but into the part of the desert adjoining Goshen. In this there was no deception. The Israelites were to ask what could not reasonably be refused, being a demand quite in accordance with Egyptian customs. *Cook.*——The Israelites were not lawfully his bondmen, and owed him

no service which was incompatible with this demand. By refusing this trifling petition, and thereby intimating that he designed to perpetuate their servitude among a heathen people, he justly fell under the Divine judgment. God designed from the first to lead out the people of Israel, but he would not put any force on Pharaoh's will. His unrighteous tyranny in refusing a just demand must first be brought to light, ere God would show in him his might. *Gerl.*——The presentation of the demand in this mild form, so far from being a piece of cunning policy, was in reality a merciful probation given by God to Pharaoh ; and if he had possessed the wisdom to improve it by granting the favor asked, no plagues had been sent to waste his land, but the richest blessings which the Lord could bestow would have descended on him and on his people. W. M. T.

**21, 22.** The Israelites are not to go out empty-handed. The sojourn of Joseph in Egypt as a bond-slave had been the means of preserving the inhabitants of that country from extermination by a seven years' famine. The residence of his kindred in Goshen had always been a benefit and not a burden to Egypt. And for the last two or three generations the Israelites had been bond-slaves, toiling for the prosperity and aggrandisement of the nation. They had, therefore, an undoubted right to ask, and the Egyptians were eventually glad to give them some aid for their journey. *Shall ask*, as a gift, if not a compensation for long unrequited services. M.——The Hebrew word, which our translators have rendered *borrow*, does not signify to borrow, but to *ask* one *to give*. It is the very word used in Ps. 2 : 8, "ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen." When they were leaving Egypt, the Children of Israel *asked* the Egyptians for "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment ;" and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they gave them what they asked for freely. *Shuckford.*

The abundant use of personal ornaments by the Egyptians, and especially of ornaments in silver and gold, implied in the direction given to the Israelites to "ask" such things of their neighbors and lodgers before their departure from Egypt, and in the "spoil" which they thus acquired (ch. 12 : 36), is among the facts most copiously attested by the extant remains. Ornaments in gold and silver have been found in the tombs, not only of the great and opulent, but even of comparatively poor persons ; they were frequently worn by the men, and probably few women were without them. Among the articles obtained from the tombs are "rings, bracelets, armlets, necklaces, ear-rings, and numerous trinkets belonging to the toilet." Most of these articles were common to the two sexes ; but earrings were affected especially, if not exclusively, by the women. G. R.——No traveller up the Nile will have failed to see in the tombs of the twelfth dynasty at Beni Hassan —where the fluted Doric columns antedate by one or two thousand years those of Greece—the picture of the whole process of washing the ore, fusing the metal with the help of the blow-pipe, making it into ornaments, weighing it in scales peculiar to this use, together with the various operations of the goldsmith. But this, though older far than the Exodus, is not the earliest indication. "The same mode of washing and working it is figured on monuments of the fourth dynasty." Any one who has seen but a part of the Egyptian jewelry that is scattered in the museums of the world, and especially the superb collection in the Boulak Museum, largely from the tomb of queen Ah-hotep, the mother of Aahmes, will need no commendation of the Egyptian jeweller's skill, even to the art of imitating the emerald, amethyst and lapis-lazuli in glass. S. C. B.

**Chap. 4.** Moses relates in this chapter how hesitatingly he obeyed God, not from stubbornness but from timidity, for he does not shake off the yoke, but shrinks away that it may not be placed upon him. We must carefully distinguish between the timidity which delays our progress and the bold refusal which is allied to contempt. Moses seems, indeed, to murmur and to enter into altercation with God ; but he knew that his countrymen were depraved and almost intractable ; disburdening himself of this anxiety into the bosom of God, he desires to be confirmed by a fresh promise. *Calv.*—— Moses knew that One was sending him who had a right to send him and whom he ought to obey. He felt in himself an utter incapacity for the work which was laid upon him ; he had a desire to shrink from it, and to bury himself in the earth, rather than undertake it. And with this cowardice he had the courage to speak it out ; he believed that the Being who was holding converse with him desired truth in his inward parts, and would bear no prevarication. He could tell all that was in him, because he was sure that there was One near who understood him, and could set him right ; of all assurances the most helpful to a man who craves to be right himself ; the most indispensable to one who has a great task to fulfil for his brethren. *Maurice.*

With this chapter begins the series of miracles which resulted in the deliverance of Israel. It is clear that unless a spiritual miracle transcending outward marvels had been wrought in the hearts both of the Israelites and of their oppressors, some special manifestations of divine power were indispensable. The first miracle was wrought to remove the first obstacle, viz. the reluctance of Moses, conscious of his own weakness, and of the enormous power with which he would have to contend. *Cook.*

**1–9.** God had said (ch. 3 : 18), *They shall hearken to thy voice.* If God says, *They will*, does it become Moses to say, *They will not?* Surely, he means, "Perhaps, they will not at first," or "Some of them will not." If there should be some gainsayers among them who would question his commission, how should he deal with them? And what course should he take to convince them? He remembered how they had once rejected him, and feared it would be so again. H.——The future is made known to him in its details, that he may be even now prepared for the first disappointment. And three signs are given him, just like credential letters, so that every doubt, even the most obstinate, may finally give way. Here are the first recorded miracles of sacred history; and these first miracles were medicines applied to the dejected soul of the great prophet of the Old Economy. False confidence in his own strength has been destroyed in Moses' heart; but now the real confidence of faith has yet to be stirred up and strengthened, and to this great work the Lord here turns, employing types and sacred symbols to express his promises. *Van O.*——The gift of miracles was communicated with especial reference to Moses himself. His doubts and incredulity were to be overcome by the consciousness that he was the possessor of such powers; and the miracles themselves were of such a nature as to furnish a type and guarantee of the progress and success of his mission. K.

These miracles were intended to be like "a voice" from heaven, bearing direct testimony to the truth of Moses' commission. But while this was the general purpose of *the three signs* now displayed—first to Moses himself—each had also its special reference: the first to Pharaoh, the second to Israel, and the third to the might of Egypt. In the *first sign* Moses was bidden to look at the rod in his hand. It was but an ordinary shepherd's staff. At God's command he was to cast it on the ground, when presently it was changed into a serpent, from which Moses fled in terror. Again God commands, and as Moses seized the serpent by the tail, it once more "became a rod in his hand." The meaning of this was plain. The shepherd's staff should be the wonder-working "rod of God," and the humble shepherd, who would have fled from Pharaoh, should, through Divine strength, overcome all the might of Egypt. The *second sign* shown to Moses bore direct reference to Israel. The hand which Moses was directed to put in his bosom became covered with leprosy; but the same hand, when a second time he thrust it in, was restored whole. This miraculous power of inflicting and removing a plague, universally admitted to come from God, showed that Moses could inflict and remove the severest judgments of God. The *third sign* given to Moses, in which the water from the Nile when poured upon the ground was to become blood, bore special reference to the land of Egypt. The Nile, on which its whole fruitfulness depended, and which the Egyptians worshipped as divine, was to be changed into blood. Egypt and its gods were to be brought low before the absolute power which God would manifest. A. E.

**8. The voice of the first sign.** By a beautiful figure these signs are described as having a voice, because they speak to the people of the presence and power of God with his messenger. M.

**10.** Formerly he had burned with eager desire to appear as the deliverer of his people, and had offered to effect it of his own accord; but now he sought in every way to excuse himself from the divine command, by which he was called and equipped for the task. The discipline of his desert-school had taught him humility, and had made him conscious of his utter weakness. But he still wanted that true and proper confidence in the power and wisdom of God, by which the weak can be made strong. Not that he had any doubt as to the power of God; but he doubted *his own* fitness to serve as the organ of this power, although God himself had called him. With inexhaustible patience God follows the windings of his false humility, meeting his difficulties with promises and assurances of strength, and his refusals with mildness, but with firmness also.

**11–13.** Jehovah has an answer to every doubt, a promise for every fear, an inexhaustible supply for every want, and divine strength for every human weakness, which he lays in the scale. We look with heartfelt joy at the manner in which one fear after another is taken away from the trembling Moses. And when at length his fears are all exhausted, and he has no more excuses left, we expect to find him

yield, and to hear at length his "yea and Amen." But no, hitherto his refusal has been conditional, but now it is unconditional. All that God has spoken, and promised, and done, appears to be thrown away, and to have been utterly in vain. K.——"O Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." But he was the man appointed for that task ; for this he had been born ; for this preserved ; for this trained ; and there was no escape for him. God knew his fitness better than Moses knew himself, and the command became imperative upon him. *Kit.*

**14. The anger of the Lord was kindled.** But this anger was still attended by the love which assists the weak. Moses was told that Aaron, his brother, should be sent by Jehovah to meet him, and should stand by his side to assist him in his arduous task. The eloquence of Aaron would thus hide his brother's want of the gift of speech, and supply the deficiency. "He shall be thy mouth, and thou shalt be his God " We may see how necessary it was that all the weakness and faint-heartedness, the incredulity and unbelief which Moses displayed, should be brought out and overcome before he entered upon his mission, when we consider how serious and dangerous the slightest manifestation of it at a later period would have been, whether in the presence of Pharaoh or of the people. Then the reproach of Moses would have been the reproach of God, and his fall would have ruined his work. It was necessary that he should stand before God weak and fainthearted, despairing and of little faith, in order that he might be strengthened by God to stand firm before Pharaoh and the people, as a divine hero possessed of undaunted courage and unshaken confidence. K.——It is clear that distrust was at the bottom of the extreme reluctance shown by Moses to accept of the commission to rescue the Israelites ; for afterward, when he found himself supported and backed by that Being under whom he acted, his proceedings were prompt, and his courage and zeal never failed. *Forsyth.*

**He cometh forth to meet thee.** Among the most confirming signs given by God to Moses, we must reckon the interview with his brother Aaron ; which, being predicted by God and *directly* happening, was very convincing to Moses. Aaron would not have taken a long journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai unless he had been well assured of the authority which sent him. Neither could he have expected to find Moses where he did find him, unless by Divine direction ; since the place, afterward called "the Mount of God," was then unfrequented. Inasmuch as Aaron was a sign to Moses by meeting him there, so Moses was a sign to Aaron. Aaron joined Moses after the affair of Zipporah ; no doubt, he related to Moses the events in Egypt and the death of the former Pharaoh. *Calmet.*

**16. And he shall be thy spokesman.** God destroys the pretext for his exemption by assigning to his brother the office of spokesman, and yet does he not put the other in his place ; nay, while he yields to his servant's prayer, he yet confers honor upon him in spite of himself. The offices are thus divided—Moses is to have the authority, Aaron is to be the interpreter. *Calv.*——According to the foregoing appointment, when the people and elders of Israel were assembled, it was Aaron "who spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did all the signs in the sight of the people" (ver. 30). And in every subsequent conference with Pharaoh and the whole deliverance from Egypt, Aaron is the inseparable companion of Moses, and always acts the same subordinate but necessary and important part. *Graves.*

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Inspiration apart, Moses possessed all those endowments and qualities which form the consummate statesman and chief magistrate :—an intellect of the highest order : a perfect master of all the civil wisdom of the age : a penetrating, comprehensive, and sagacious judgment : great promptness and energy in action : patriotism, which neither ingratitude, ill-treatment, nor rebellion could quench, or even cool : a commanding and persuasive eloquence : a hearty love of truth : an incorruptible virtue : an entire freedom from selfish ambition : an invincible hatred of tyranny and injustice : a patient endurance of toil : a courageous contempt of danger : and a greatness of soul, in which he has never been surpassed by the most admired heroes of ancient or modern times. E. C. W

If God called any one man to special work, we are entitled to reason that God has a special work for every man to do. It is impossible that God has called us into existence without having some purpose for us to work at within the limit of time. To be here at all is to be in possession of a destiny. It is an awful power with which we are endowed, that we can shut our eyes to destiny beckoning us to duty, and can so pervert and misinterpret circumstances as to press them into a justification of self-will and apostasy. To know that my life may be called to a unique vocation excites me with very

anxious emotion. What if I have mistaken the Divine will? What if I am pursuing the wrong road? What if I have been judging by appearances and neglecting the teaching of reality? Has self-interest determined my action? Has self-indulgence wrought its unholy spell upon my energies and affections? Have I been earnestly listening to hear the voice which teaches the way of duty and the path of sacrifice? Spirit of the Living God, reveal my destiny to me, though it mean pain or loss, continual discipline of fear, or the blessed experience of daily joy. If I may but know thy purpose, such knowledge shall itself be inspiration and defence.

Moses fell back upon his own unworthiness. He forgot the promise, "Certainly I will be with thee." The moment we get away from Divine promise and forget great principles, we degrade all service. Self-consciousness is the ruin of all vocations. Let a man look into himself and measure his work by himself, and the movement of his life will be downward and exhaustive. Let him look away from himself to the Inspirer of his life and the Divine reward of his labors, and he will not so much as see the difficulties which may stand ever so thickly in the way. J. P.

Would that there were no Christians who, like Moses, we might almost say, delight in heaping up objections, and in answering that grand, irrevocable "Yea" of God's word with an everlasting "But!" This was forgiven Moses; he was, moreover, wholly cured of it. The Lord will bear with this in you too, ye who are upright in heart. God gives complete solution of the trifling difficulties and objections which we raise; but after that, we must advance at his appointed time. Then, in God's name, advance! from faith to stronger faith, and straightway, too, from light to greater light, from strength to strength, from victory to victory,—still on! Even in the darkest night, only let that name shine on you as if it were inscribed with stars, the name which God gives himself, I AM. He lives, and he abides; then, whether it be here on earth or up in heaven, we must all live by him, for him, with him! *Van O.*

# Section 84.

## MOSES RETURNS, WITH AARON, TO EGYPT. GOD'S MESSAGE TO PHARAOH. RESULTS TO ISRAEL.

EXODUS 4 : 18–31 ; 5 : 1–23 ; 6 : 1.

18 AND Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go,
I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet
19 alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace. And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian,
20 Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took
his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and
21 Moses took the rod of God in his hand. And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest
back into Egypt, see that thou do before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in thine
22 hand: but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. And thou shalt say
23 unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, my firstborn: and I have said unto
thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me; and thou hast refused to let him go: behold, I
24 will slay thy son, thy firstborn. And it came to pass on the way at the lodging place, that
25 the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said, Surely a bridegroom of blood art
26 thou to me. So he let him alone. Then she said, A bridegroom of blood *art thou*, because of the circumcision.

27 And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and
28 met him in the mountain of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of
the LORD wherewith he had sent him, and all the signs wherewith he had charged him.
29 And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:
30 and Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs

31 in the sight of the people. And the people believed : and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had seen their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

5 : 1 And afterward Moses and Aaron came, and said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.
2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go?
3 I know not the LORD, and moreover I will not let Israel go. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us : let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God ; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the
4 sword. And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, loose
5 the people from their works? get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the
6 people of the land are now many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. And the
7 same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore : let them go and gather
8 straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them ; ye shall not diminish aught thereof : for they be idle ; therefore they cry,
9 saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let heavier work be laid upon the men, that
10 they may labour therein ; and let them not regard lying words. And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pha-
11 raoh, I will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get you straw where ye can find it : for
12 nought of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout
13 all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. And the taskmasters were urgent, saying,
14 Fulfil your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task both yesterday and to-day, in making brick as
15 heretofore? Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, say-
16 ing, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick : and, behold, thy servants are beaten ; but the fault
17 is in thine own people. But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle : therefore ye say, Let us go
18 and sacrifice to the LORD. Go therefore now, and work ; for there shall no straw be given
19 you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, when it was said, Ye shall not minish aught from your bricks,
20 *your* daily tasks. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth
21 from Pharaoh : and they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge ; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his ser-
22 vants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us. And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent
23 me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath evil entreated this people ;
6 : 1 neither hast thou delivered thy people at all. And the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh : for by a strong hand shall he let them go, and by a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.

**20.** It pleased God, who could have wrought his wonders without any visible signs, that Moses should use the rod in external demonstration of the divine power : yet the Lord uses such means as have no power of themselves, or likelihood to effect that which is wrought, that the work should not be ascribed to the means. *Willet.*

**21. I will harden his heart.** The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is in this narrative ten times ascribed to the Lord. But it is also twice ascribed to Pharaoh himself. In seven other passages it is stated simply as a fact, without assigning any cause. It is evident of itself that this fact is ascribed to God and to Pharaoh in different respects ; so that the two assertions are consistent with each other. It is equally plain that the act in question belongs to Pharaoh, as the moral agent by whose intention it was performed. It belongs to God as the Designer, Creator, and Supreme Governor of the existing universe, of which free agents and their voluntary actings form a part. M.——Calamities which do not subdue the heart harden it ; and the effects of God's judgments being foreknown are willed by him. We should not therefore adopt a forced interpretation of this expression in order to explain away its apparent harshness. The hardening itself is judicial, and just, when it is a consequence of

previously formed habits ; in the case of Pharaoh it was at once a righteous judgment, and a natural result of a long series of oppressions and cruelties. Theodoret thus deals with the question : "The sun by the action of heat makes wax moist, and mud dry, hardening the one while it softens the other, by the same operation producing exactly opposite results ; thus from the long-suffering of God some derive benefit and others harm, some are softened while others are hardened." The reason why the action of God rather than the character of Pharaoh is dwelt on in this passage would seem to be that it was necessary to sustain the spirit of Moses and the people during the process of events, which they were thus taught were altogether foreseen and predetermined by God. *Cook.* [See Section 85.]

**22.** God had promised him (v. 12), *I will teach thee what thou shalt say ;* and here he does teach him. He must deliver his message in the name of the great Jehovah, *Thus saith the Lord ;* this is the first time *that* preface is used by any man, which afterward is used so frequently by all the prophets : whether Pharaoh will hear or whether he will forbear, Moses must tell him, *Thus saith the Lord.* H.

**My son, my firstborn.** By calling Israel His *son*, God claims liberty for him. By calling him His firstborn, He prefers him to the other nations ; as though He had said that he was raised to the primogeniture and was superior to all the world. *Calv.*——Only those who are begotten according to the counsel of salvation can be called *sons* of *Jehovah.* Israel was not called *a son of Jehovah* merely, but *the firstborn son*, who would be followed by other sons, begotten in the same manner. The election of Abraham, with all the consequent leadings and promises, the blessings and chastisements, had made Israel a son. K.

**24-26.** This surprising occurrence must be accounted for by remembering that Moses was an Israelite, bound to God by the covenant of circumcision, and that he was bringing his family to Egypt uncircumcised, having apparently conceded this point to the national habits of his wife. God had attached to the neglect of circumcision the penalty of death (Gen. 17 : 14). *How* God met with him we are left to surmise : possibly in a dangerous stroke of illness or sudden incapacity, as would appear from his inability to circumcise his own child. This took place not in the *inn* (A. V.), for there were not and are not in the East any buildings corresponding to our inns, but at the resting-place for the night. *Alf.*——The most obvious explanation of the passage is that Moses had omitted the circumcision of his son—his eldest son, it seems—probably because Zipporah, the mother, objected to the dangerous operation. For this he is punished ; for, as Knobel well observes, "he who is to bring Pharaoh to do his duty to God's firstborn must fulfil his own duty to the firstborn son who is under him, but belongs to God." To save her husband, Zipporah performs the circumcision, but tells him that she is united to him in a marriage the children of which must be bought with blood. O. ——Omissions are sins, and must come into judgment, and particularly the contempt and neglect of the seals of the covenant ; for it is a sign that we undervalue the promises of the covenant. God takes notice of, and is much displeased with, the sins of his own people ; if they neglect their duty, let them expect to hear of it by their consciences, and perhaps to feel from it by cross providences. H.

After this transaction and the developments attending it, we must suppose that Moses (prudently) sent back his wife and the two children to remain with her father until the redeemed Israelites should reach the home of Jethro. We hear no more of her and her children till the narrative in Ex. 18 brings them to view thus : "When Jethro had heard all that the Lord had done for Moses and Israel, he took Zipporah, Moses' wife, *after he had sent her back*, and her two sons and brought them to Moses." H. C.

**27. The Lord said to Aaron.** By some secret movement on Aaron's mind or by some voice, he was now directed to go and meet his brother Moses, and so correctly was the information given to both that they arrived at the *same time* on the sacred mountain. A. C——Aaron, although the elder, not only paid honor to his brother, whom he knew to be a Prophet of the Lord ; but willingly submitted himself to him as to an angel. The kiss is mentioned as a sign of recognition, by which he testified the firmness of his faith. *Calv.*——**28.** Moses was met by Aaron, as God had foretold, on the very spot where he had received the revelation, which he rehearsed to his brother, with its attendant miracles, in the mount of God. P. S. ——**29. Elders of Israel.** Their existence and office seems to infer an organization in Israel, which must have arisen in Egypt before the days of their oppression began. *Alf.*

**5 : 1.** The Pharaoh under whom the Exodus actually took place could not have been Rameses II. himself, but his son and successor, Meneptah II. His reign lasted but a short time, and it

was disturbed not only by the flight of the Children of Israel, but also by a great invasion of Northern Egypt by the Libyans, which was with difficulty repulsed. This took place in his fifth year. *Sayce.*

**Came unto Pharaoh.** The kings of Egypt probably held that sort of open court or divan, usual in oriental monarchies, in which any one may appear who would claim justice or petition for favor. Moses and Aaron stand before this throne, and solicit the temporary release of all their people, that they may offer sacrifice to their God. *Milman.*

**2. Who is the Lord.** Rather, "Who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah." This title should here be rendered verbatim, "Jehovah," rather than "Lord," since it is mentioned as the *peculiar name* of the God of Israel; whereas the title "Lord" was common to the heathen deities, many of them being called "Baalim," "Lords." This makes Pharaoh's answer more emphatic, "Who is Jehovah?"—a name of which he had never before heard. From the despised character of the people of Israel, he formed his estimate of the God whom they professed to serve. Their God was no more entitled to reverence as a deity than they were to respect as a people. *Bush.*——Egypt was then the most powerful nation of the world. Exposed on either side to the invasion of nomadic hordes, it had of necessity its standing army, and its kings, in consequence, were haughty and boastful. No other nation at that era could have produced the Pharaoh of Moses' age. And in this Pharaoh was represented—nay, as it were, *concentrated*—the spirit of the people. S. R.

He says he does not know Jehovah; he does not recognize his authority or admit his claims. His soul is full of practical unbelief in God—a fact which commonly lies at the bottom of all the hardening of sinners' hearts in every age. Pharaoh did not at first contemplate crossing swords and measuring strong arms *with the Almighty God.* If he had taken this view of the case, he might have paused awhile to consider. So it usually is with sinners. Unbelief in God conduces to launch them upon this terrible conflict. Once committed, they become more hardened; one sin leads on to more sinning till sin becomes incurable—shall we say it?—an uncontrollable madness. H. C.

**3. Lest he fall upon us.** Lest he send a plague upon us for our neglect of him. They neither wrought any miracle nor threatened any punishment upon Pharaoh on their first application to him, but told him the danger to which they were themselves exposed, if they did not obey their God. *Patrick.*——All that Moses was instructed to ask for was permission to go into a part of the desert where the people might offer sacrifices without interruption from the Egyptians. It is evident from Pharaoh's answer that he did not see in the request any indication of an intention to escape from Egypt. *Cook.*——The request for a three days' pilgrimage into the wilderness to sacrifice unto God was all the more reasonable, that Israel's sacrifices would have been "an abomination" to the Egyptians, and might have led to disturbances. It was infinite condescension to Pharaoh's weakness, on the part of God, not to insist from the first upon the immediate and entire dismissal of Israel. Less *could not* have been asked than was demanded of Pharaoh, nor could obedience have been made more easy. Only the most tyrannical determination to crush the rights and convictions of the people, and the most daring defiance of Jehovah, could have prompted him to refuse such a request, and that in face of all the signs and wonders by which the mission of Moses was accredited. Thus at the first his submission was to be tried where it was easiest to render it. A. E.

**4–19.** Instead of completing at one blow what he had promised his people and threatened Pharaoh, the Lord commences with this refusal of the king a series of trials for Israel and chastisements for Pharaoh. He purposes neither to subdue the king by the mere exercise of power, nor to assist the people without the trial of their faith. The immediate consequence of the first appeal to Pharaoh is that their condition becomes worse, and their belief in the word of promise is contradicted by the present appearance of affairs. *Gerl.*

**4, 5.** Pharaoh takes no notice of what Moses and Aaron had said to him respecting the liberation of the people, but treats them merely as the disturbers of the peace of his kingdom.

**6. The taskmasters and their officers.** These "taskmasters," lit. "exactors," constituting the highest grade of officers, were Egyptians appointed to exact labor of the Israelites. But those termed "officers" appear (vs. 14–16) to have been Israelites set over their brethren, under the taskmasters. *Bush.*

One of the most interesting tombs at Thebes is that of *Rochscere*, "the overseer of public buildings," under Thotmes III. On the walls of this tomb the monarch is seen presenting obelisks to the divinity, and these obelisks are found at this day in the temple of Karnac. Here, too, is depicted *the whole process of brick-*

*making*—the slaves of the king shaping the mud of the Nile into crude brick, just as the *fellahs* are seen doing at this day. Taskmasters with whips are stationed at intervals among the workmen, a pictorial representation of the scenes that daily occurred among the Israelites in their cruel bondage. In this picture some of the laborers are employed in transporting the clay in vessels ; some in working it up with the straw ; others are taking the bricks out of the moulds and setting them in rows to dry ; while others, by means of a yoke upon their shoulders, from which ropes are suspended at each end, are seen carrying away the bricks already dried.

**13-17**. The result was, that the taskmasters, who were responsible to the government for the production of the bricks, reprimanded and even beat the Hebrew overseers (*officers*), who were accountable to them. The beating is characteristic of the people ; for one needs only to look into a book of Egyptian antiquities to see how freely the stick was administered to people of all ages, and of either sex. In fact, from the evidence this people have themselves left to the world in their monuments, it would seem as if Egypt was, as much as China at the present day, ruled by the rod. The overseers were at length urged to carry their complaints to the king. But the stern answer was, "Ye are idle, ye are idle : therefore ye say, let us go and do sacrifice to Jehovah. Go therefore now and work." *Kit.*

**22.** Moses could not reconcile the adverse providence with the promise and commission he had received. He had indeed been taught to anticipate Pharaoh's refusal to let the people go, but he was taken by surprise on finding their burdens increased. It seemed that his mission was utterly abortive, and that thus far not one step had been taken toward their deliverance. But *we* can put a more correct construction upon this apparently mysterious style of dispensation. To *us* it is not a strange spectacle to see the most merciful counsels of God ushered in by a train of events apparently the most disastrous ; to see his dearest servants reduced to the utmost straits just when he is ready to appear for their deliverance. This result is suffered to take place that we may learn to cease from man, and that the divine interpositions may be more endeared to the hearts of those that wait for them. *Bush.*——If Moses did amiss in repining, he did well in "returning unto the Lord, ' and making his complaint, not to others, but to him. So did David, the man after God's own heart : "When I am in heaviness," saith he, "I will think upon God ; when my heart is vexed, I will complain" (Ps. 77 : 3). So did Paul, when buffeted by the messenger of Satan he applied himself to God for relief, and besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him ; but the answer was (and he acquiesced in it), "My grace is sufficient for thee." *Wogan.*——With every fresh movement of God's grace in the inner life, fresh difficulties and questions are raised. If we will bring these before the Lord, though it should be with the expression of trembling and grief, yet are they not to be regarded as signs of unbelief, but rather of the struggles and contests of faith ; and the Lord is patient toward the doubtings of human shortsightedness. *Gerl.*

**6 : 1.** To the almost reproachful utterance of Moses, God answers patiently, saying that it is his glory to see that what he has promised and predicted will come to pass. It is not ours to question that God will fulfil his promises ; it is ours always and everywhere to fulfil the obligations that he has laid upon us. God says, that, so far from Pharaoh succeeding, he will be glad to let these poor brickmakers and slaves go forth from his land. There is something very encouraging in this ; that God, instead of rebuking strongly the unbelief of his servants, gives another manifestation of his greatness to their senses, in order to overcome by love, instead of repressing by rebuke, their unbelief and suspicions. J. C.

The first interview of Moses with Pharaoh served to determine the relationship of all parties in reference to the Divine command. It had brought out the enmity of Pharaoh, ripening for judgment ; the unbelief of Israel, needing much discipline ; and even the weakness of Moses. A. E.

### The Three Pharaohs of the Exodus.

The period now commonly assigned to the Exodus is the reign of Meneptah, son of Rameses II. The father, Rameses (the great "Sesostris"), would thus have been on the throne at Moses' birth, and in his long reign of sixty-six years would have been the great oppressor. His policy and sceptre passing into the hands of his feebler son, brought on the crisis and the deliverance. This is the view of Rougé, Mariette, Lenormant, Maspero, Ebers, Brugsch, Bunsen, Birch, and Poole. The name of the stronghold, "Rameses," points at once to a monarch of that name ; and there is nothing to connect the only previous monarch of that name, Rameses I. (the grandfather of Rameses II.), obscure and short-lived, with the enterprise. But the long reign of Rameses II., his boastful spirit, his foreign wars, his vast public works, including numerous temples, the canal, and a line of fortresses on his eastern frontier

(a circumstance which coincides with the fears expressed in Ex. 1 : 10), and the air of oppression which the monuments ascribe to his reign, all furnish a strong basis for the theory. No name is so boastfully and ubiquitously spread over the buildings of Egypt as that of Rameses II. Of his son Meneptah's reign, the notices are exceedingly slight. No monumental record of his bears date later than his second year, although a tablet describing a victory over the Libyans is referred to his eighth year, soon after which the Exodus is supposed to have taken place. In the time of Meneptah Egypt was a mighty empire of ancient civilization. Most of her huge edifices, including nearly all the vast structures of Thebes, were in existence. The complication of her social life, even to the elaborate *cuisine*, may be read in the tombs of the kings and men of wealth. The skill of her jewellers in the eighteenth dynasty may be admired in the museum at Boulak. The processes of her goldsmiths in the twelfth dynasty are seen delineated at Beni-Hassan. The temper of her cutting tools may be witnessed in the multitudinous and deep inscriptions on her granite obelisks. The greatness of her revenues is exhibited in the records of Thotmes III. Her military resources in the time of Meneptah s father are boastfully set forth in the poem of the Pentaur. S. C. B.

If Meneptah I., the son and successor of Rameses II., was the Pharaoh of the Exodus, it follows necessarily that his father, the *great* Rameses, was the king of Ex. 2, from whom Moses fled, and after whose death he was directed to quit Midian and return into Egypt for the purpose of delivering his brethren (ch. 2 : 23 ; 4 : 19). But as Moses was eighty years old at this time (ch. 7 : 7), it is evident that the Pharaoh from whom he fled cannot be the same with the one who, more than eighty years previously, gave the order for the destruction of the Hebrew male children (ch. 1 : 22). The narrative of Exodus must speak of three Pharaohs, of the first in ch. 1, of the second in ch. 2, and of the third in chs. 5–14. If the second of these is Rameses II., the father of Meneptah I., the first must be Seti I., the father of Rameses II. Now, it happens that Seti I. and Rameses II. are among the most distinguished of all the Egyptian monarchs, great warriors, great builders, setters-up of numerous inscriptions. We know them almost better than any other Egyptian kings, are familiar with their very countenances, have ample means of forming an estimate of their characters from their own words. Seti I. may well be the "new king, which knew not Joseph."

Rameses II. was associated on the throne by his father when he was ten or eleven years of age. The two kings then reigned conjointly for about twenty years. Rameses outlived his father forty-seven years, and probably had the real direction of the government for about sixty years. There is no other reign in the New Empire which reaches nearly to the length of his. He was less of a warrior than his father, and more of a builder. Among his principal works was the completion of the city of Rameses (Pi-Rameses), begun by his father, and made by Rameses the residence of the court, and one of the chief cities of the empire. He appears also to have completed Pithom (Pi-Tum), and to have entirely built many other important towns. All his works were raised by means of forced labor ; and for the purpose of their construction he required an enormous mass of human material, which had to be constantly employed under taskmasters in the most severe and exhausting toil. Besides his suitability in character to be the Pharaoh who continued the severe oppression begun by Seti I., Rameses II., by the great length of his reign, exactly fits into the requirements of the Biblical narrative. He alone verges upon the time at which the severe oppression must necessarily be placed. It can scarcely be a coincidence that Egyptian tradition should point out Meneptah I. as the Pharaoh of the Exodus, and that, the Biblical narrative assigning to his predecessor an exceptionally long reign, the monuments and Manetho should agree in giving to that predecessor the exceptionally long reign of sixty-six or sixty-seven years.

The portraits of the first and second Pharaohs mentioned in the Book of Exodus are only faintly and slightly sketched. That of the third monarch—"the Pharaoh of the Exodus," as he is commonly termed—is, on the contrary, presented to us with much clearness and distinctness, though without effort or conscious elaboration. He is an oppressor as merciless as either of his predecessors, as deaf to pity, as determined to crush the aspirations of the Hebrews by hard labor. To him belongs the ingenious device for aggravating suffering, which has passed into the proverbial phraseology of modern Europe, the requirement of "bricks without straw." He disregards the afflictions of his own countrymen as completely as those of his foreign slaves, and continues fixed in his determination not to "let Israel go," until he suffers the loss of his own firstborn. When finally he has been induced to allow the Hebrews to withdraw themselves from his land, he suddenly repents of his concession, pursues after them, and seeks, not so much to prevent their escape, as to destroy them to the last man (15 : 9). To this harshness and cruelty of temper he adds a remarkable weakness and vacillation—he will and he will not ; he makes promises and retracts them ; he "thrusts the Israelites out" (11 : 1 ; 12 : 31), and then rushes after them at the head of all the troops that he can muster (14 : 5–9). Further—and this is most remarkable—unlike the generality of Egyptian monarchs, he seems to be deficient in personal courage ; at any rate, there is no appearance of his having imperilled himself in the attack made on the Israelites at the Red Sea,—"the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen" (14 : 23) ; but not, so far as appears, Pharaoh himself. Neither the narrative in Exod. 14 nor the song of rejoicing in the following chapter contains the slightest allusion to the Pharaoh's death, an omission almost inconceivable if he really perished with his warriors. Further the Pharaoh of the Exodus seems to have been grossly and abnormally superstitious, one who put trust in magicians and sorcerers, and turned to them in times of difficulty.

What, then, does profane history tell us of

the Meneptah whom we have shown to be at once the traditional "Pharaoh of the Exodus" and the king pointed out by chronological considerations as the ruler of Egypt at the period? M. Lenormant begins his account of him by observing, "He was neither a soldier nor an administrator, but one whose mind was turned almost exclusively toward the chimeras of sorcery and magic." "The Book of Exodus," he adds, "is in the most exact agreement with historical truth when it depicts him as surrounded by priest-magicians, with whom Moses contends in working prodigies, in order to affect the mind of the Pharaoh." Later on in his history of Meneptah, M. Lenormant has the following passage, referring to his repulse of the great Libyan invasion in his fifth year. "Sending forward in advance, first of all, his chariot-force and his light-armed auxiliaries, the Pharaoh *promised to join the battle array* with the bulk of his troops *at the end of fourteen days. But he was not personally fond of actual fight, and disliked exposing himself to the chance of defeat.* An apparition of the god Phthah, which he saw in a dream, warned him that his lofty rank required him not to cross the river. He therefore sent his army to the combat under the command of some of his father's generals, who were still living." The dream is clearly a convenient fiction, by means of which he might at once conceal his cowardice and excuse the forfeiture of his word. The Egyptian monuments thus confirm three leading features in the character of Meneptah,—his superstitiousness, his want of courage, and his weak, shifty, false temper.

It was not to be expected that the general series of events related in the first fourteen chapters of Exodus should obtain any direct mention in the historical records of Egypt. As M. Chabas remarks, "events of this kind were not entitled to be inscribed on the public monuments, where nothing was ever registered except successes and triumphs." The court historiographers would naturally refrain from all mention of the terrible plagues from which Egypt suffered during a whole year, as well as from any record of the disaster of the Red Sea; and the monarch would certainly not inscribe any account of them upon his edifices. G. R.

## Section 85.

PLEDGES RENEWED TO ISRAEL. CHARGE TO MOSES AND AARON. HEADS OF HOUSES. HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART.

EXODUS 6 : 2-30 ; 7 : 1-13.

6 : 2 AND God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am JEHOVAH : and I appeared unto
3 Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH I was not
4 known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land
5 of Canaan, the land of their sojournings, wherein they sojourned. And moreover I have
heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I
6 have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah,
and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of
their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments :
7 and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God : and ye shall know that
I am Jehovah your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to
Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage : I am Jehovah.
9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel : but they hearkened not unto Moses for
anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.
10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt,
11 that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And Moses spake before the LORD,
12 saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh
13 hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips? And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron,
and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to
bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.
14 These are the heads of their fathers' houses : the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel;
15 Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi : these are the families of Reuben. And the sons of
Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a
16 Canaanitish woman : these are the families of Simeon. And these are the names of the
sons of Levi according to their generations : Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari : and the
17 years of the life of Levi were an hundred thirty and seven years. The sons of Gershon;
18 Libni and Shimei, according to their families. And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and

Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel : and the years of the life of Kohath were an hundred thirty
19 and three years. And the sons of Merari ; Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the
20 Levites according to their generations. And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister
to wife ; and she bare him Aaron and Moses : and the years of the life of Amram were an
21 hundred and thirty and seven years. And the sons of Izhar ; Korah, and Nepheg, and
22 Zichri. And the sons of Uzziel ; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Sithri And Aaron took him
23 Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Nahshon, to wife ; and she bare him
24 Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. And the sons of Korah ; Assir, and Elkanah, and
25 Abiasaph ; these are the families of the Korahites. And Eleazar Aaron's son took him one
of the daughters of Putiel to wife ; and she bare him Phinehas. These are the heads of the
26 fathers' *houses* of the Levites according to their families. These are that Aaron and Moses,
to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according
27 to their hosts. These are they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the
children of Israel from Egypt : these are that Moses and Aaron.

28 And it came to pass on the day when the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,
29 that the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I am the LORD : speak thou unto Pharaoh king of
30 Egypt all that I speak unto thee. And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I am of uncir-
7 : 1 cumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me? And the LORD said unto Moses,
See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh : and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.
2 Thou shalt speak all that I command thee : and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pha-
3 raoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's
4 heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not
hearken unto you, and I will lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth my hosts, my people
5 the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgements. And the Egyptians
shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out
6 the children of Israel from among them. And Moses and Aaron did so ; as the LORD com-
7 manded them, so did they. And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and
three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

8 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto
9 you, saying, Shew a wonder for you : then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and
10 cast it down before Pharaoh, that it become a serpent And Moses and Aaron went in unto
Pharaoh, and they did so, as the LORD had commanded : and Aaron cast down his rod be-
11 fore Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called
for the wise men and the sorcerers : and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did in like man-
12 ner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became
13 serpents : but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. And Pharaoh's heart was hardened,
and he hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken.

**6 : 2-13.** The oppression of the people, Moses' call and going down into Egypt, his first announcement of the Divine will to Pharaoh, the refusal of the king, the still harder servitude of Israel,—all this combined had extorted from Moses the almost despairing cry of complaint (ch. 5 : 22, 23). Now commences properly the history of the deliverance. In another appearance and address, God renews the former declarations and promises. He explains more fully the name by which it was his wish to be known to Israel. Even this fresh and solemn declaration of his gracious purposes makes no impression on the people under their hard burdens, and Moses repeats his complaints. Henceforth begin the deeds of the Lord—his wonders in Egypt. *Gerl.*

**3. I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty** (Hebrew *El-Shaddai*), **but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.** It was not the name, but the true depth of its significance which was unknown to and uncomprehended by the patriarchs. They had known God as the omnipotent, *El Shaddai*, the ruler of the physical universe, and of man as one of his creatures ; as a God eternal, immutable, and true to his promises he was yet to be revealed. *Dic. B.*——The meaning is, not that the name Jehovah was never used by them or given of God to them ; but that its special significance had not been manifested to them as he was now about to make it manifest. His *power* God had revealed—his power to protect them in their perils, his power to fulfil to Abraham the promise of a son ; but such a glorious testimony to his faithfulness in fulfilling promise as was now to be given, the patriarchs had never seen. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage was destined to stand through all the ages of their history as the crowning manifestation of God's faithfulness—the standard and unsurpassed testimony to the significance of his most honored name *Jehovah*. By this shall ye know

that I am Jehovah your God when I bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians and bring you into the land given by solemn oath to your fathers and to their posterity for a heritage (vs. 7, 8). H. C.

*El-Shaddai* is the Almighty God, who by his creative omnipotence prepared the natural conditions and vital agencies required for the development of salvation, and hence the word sets forth one view of the Elohistic existence of God, on which it was necessary that peculiar stress should be laid. *Jehovah* is the God engaged in the development of salvation, who enters into it himself, manifests himself in it and with it, and therefore conducts it with absolute certainty to the desired result. All that *Jehovah* had performed in connection with the patriarchal history *was limited* to *the election and call of individuals*, to *the communication of directions and promises, and the fostering of faith in the directions and promises given.* Hitherto there had been no embodiment in *fact;* there had been merely the introduction of an idea, which was to be realized and embodied for the first time at Sinai. *Hence the patriarchs could only grasp the operations of Jehovah in faith and hope;* they could not *see* them ; they did not *feel and know them as something actually accomplished and fulfilled.* This was reserved for their descendants, to whom Moses was sent with the message that it was now about to happen. This then, and this alone, is the meaning of the words of God : "They have *known* me, my nature, and my operations, as El-Shaddai, but not as Jehovah ; *you* shall soon know me as Jehovah also. K. ——The time was now come when God was to be known by his name "Jehovah," in the *doing* of what he had before decreed, and the *fulfilling* of what he had before promised. Accordingly in the words immediately following (vs. 4–8), God goes on to assure them that he will make good his promise by establishing his covenant. *Bush.*

The name Jehovah *was* (or rather *became*) undoubtedly a new one then, but only in the sense in which Christ said, "A *new* commandment give I unto you," whereas he merely repeated one of the primary commandments, which we find in the Old Testament and meet with on every hand in the laws of Moses. It was a commandment, however, the fulness and depth, the meaning, force, and value of which were first unfolded by the gospel And just as the greatest act of love which the world ever witnessed provided a new field for the exemplification of this command in greater glory than was possible under the law, and thus the old commandment became a *new* one ; so did the new act of God in the redemption of Israel from Egypt, furnish a new field in which the ancient name of God struck fresh and deeper roots, and thus the ancient name became a new one. K.

The Divine Being who appeared to these ancient saints many times in various visible forms and covenanted with them, did never assume the name *Jehovah* to himself in the appearances, nor covenant with them by this name. He appeared unto Abraham, entering into covenant with him as *El-Shaddai*, "God Almighty." Isaac in transferring the blessings of the covenant to Jacob used the same covenant title, "God Almighty bless thee." So when God appeared to Jacob, again the title *El-Shaddai* was the covenant name used. God might say, "I am Jehovah, and I *appeared* unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name God Almighty (*El-Shaddai*), but by my name, Jehovah, was I not *made known* to them." Observe, it is not "I was not known," but "not *made known*"—that is, did not reveal myself by that name in any theophany to covenant with them. And not only is this statement in precise harmony with the facts of the previous history, but is itself the key to the singular fact, that though so often spoken of as Jehovah in other relations, God had not announced himself as such in any of the many covenants with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This term Jehovah, while it is applied to the invisible God, is applied in the narration also to the visible God manifest in the flesh and in the shadowy forms of the ancient theophanies which foreshadowed the incarnation. Not without abundant reason in the history might Jesus assume to himself the title "Ehjeh," saying, "Before Abraham was I AM." And if it was Jesus in his pre-existing nature, the second person of the Godhead, that in this patriarchal history made these appearances to Abraham and entered into the covenant with him—and this is Jesus Christ the second person of the Godhead who appears in the burning bush and speaks to Moses—then have we found the clew of the somewhat singular application of the titles of God found in the patriarchal history. If Jesus is the Jehovah in the revelation of the burning bush, then he is also, for he declares he is, the *El-Shaddai*—Almighty God—who covenanted with Abraham—and the Angel of the covenant so often mentioned in the history of the patriarch. And he is called the Angel because, as mediator and messenger of the Infinite, invisible God, he is sent on these missions to earth. Now,

though the name *Jehovah* was from the beginning well known as the title of the eternal, invisible and incomprehensible God, it was not known as a name also belonging to the "God *manifest*," the visible representative Angel of God, until the secret is revealed to Moses at the burning bush. And the fact that Moses wrote the book of Genesis *after* this revelation explains why he represents the Angel who appears to make these covenants, and to execute the fulfilment of them, as also the Jehovah whom the patriarch conceived of only as the invisible and incomprehensible God. S. R.

**4, 5.** Two reasons are assigned for the promise that follows, viz. the old covenant with the patriarchs, and the divine compassion for the sufferings of Israel. *Cook.*——**6–8.** Here is line upon line to assure them, that they should be brought triumphantly out of Egypt, and should be put in possession of the land of Canaan; *I will bring you out. I will rid you. I will redeem you. I will bring you into the land of Canaan, and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God.* H.——**8. I am Jehovah.** The continual repetition of the covenant promise in connection with the name JEHOVAH marks forcibly the inauguration of that sacred name as the future appellation of the God of Israel. *Alf.*——In the dawn of Hebrew history God gives his people a memorial *name*, by which he should be known forever,—Jehovah,—a seal upon his covenant with them, a name of promise, pointing to a deliverance to come, a Saviour, a Messiah; and that mighty name stood, on the lips and in the mind of the chosen tribes, through centuries of trial and expectation, an impregnable defence, an inexhaustible hope, an unfailing herald of redemption to come. F. D. H.

**9. They hearkened not unto Moses.** Ah, how frail is poor human nature! How weak is the faith of this long-oppressed people! But God's compassions are a great deep and he does not frown severely upon them, broken down though they were in their manhood and in their religious trust. Moses too seems to falter before this stern reception from Pharaoh and this disheartening attitude of Israel (v. 12); but the loving-kindness of the Lord endures, despite of these sad imperfections in his servants. For the glory of his own name and not for the worthiness or virtue of his people, he has entered upon this redeeming work and he will carry it through. H. C.——Insurmountable, to human apprehension, are the difficulties which surround the Hebrew leader; and the most fearful of them are those which he has to contend with in his own countrymen. There is neither union nor confidence among them. There is neither courage nor self-respect. Long endurance of slavery and misery has extinguished such sentiments. From this people he can expect nothing. Yet without this people he can do nothing. What remains to him? Before he gives them freedom, he must make them capable of freedom. He must restore to them those elements of humanity which they have lost. He must give back to them the qualities which a long persecution has smothered. He must rekindle in them hope, courage, generosity, self-respect, and enthusiasm. E. C. W.

**10, 11.** God still moved forward in his measures for their relief, as if he heard not or heeded not their unbelieving complaints. But the punishment which is ripening even for Pharaoh is not to be inflicted without further warnings. When the Lord is about to visit with judgments, we see him advancing as with slow and reluctant steps. When misery is to be relieved, benefits conferred, or sins forgiven, the blessing makes haste to spend itself upon its objects. But when the wicked are to be dealt with, justice seems to regret the necessity under which it is laid to maintain itself, and the sinner is not destroyed till the equity of his condemnation is manifest, and everything around him calls for vengeance. *Bush.*

**11. Go out of his land.** There is now a change in the demand; the first of a series of changes. Moses is now bidden to demand not a permission for a three days' journey, which might be within the boundaries of Egypt, but for departure from the land.

**13. Unto Moses and unto Aaron.** The final and formal charge to the two brothers is given, as might be expected, before the plagues are denounced. With this verse begins a new section of the history, and as in the book of Genesis "there is in every such case a brief repetition of so much of the previous account as is needed to make it an intelligible narrative in itself; a peculiarity which extends to the lesser subdivisions also." *Cook.*

**14–27.** The occasion of this solemn inauguration of the mission of Moses and Aaron is taken to insert the genealogical notice of the heads of the houses of the tribes until Levi, from whom the descent of Moses and Aaron is given. The whole of this portion is remarkably illustrative of the fragmentary and compound character of this part of the history. *Alf.*

We have here a genealogy of those two great patriots, Moses and Aaron, to show that they were Israelites, bone of their bone and flesh of

their flesh, whom they were sent to deliver, raised up unto them of their brethren, as Christ also should be, who was to be the Prophet and Priest, the Redeemer and Lawgiver, of the people of Israel, and whose genealogy also was to be carefully preserved. The heads of the houses of three of the tribes are here named. Reuben, Simeon, and Levi are thus dignified here because they three were left under marks of infamy by their dying father, Reuben for his incest, and Simeon and Levi for their murder of the Shechemites; and therefore Moses would put this particular honor upon them to magnify God's mercy in their repentance and remission, as a pattern to them that should afterward believe: the two first seem to be mentioned only for the sake of Levi, from whom Moses and Aaron descended, and all the priests of the Jewish church. H.——It is easily seen that he especially refers to the tribe of Levi. This is the point to be observed, that the minister of their deliverance, by whose hand God would ratify the truth of his promise, was chosen from the race of Abraham. *Calv.*

Beyond all question some links have been omitted in tracing the line of Moses' descent. The genealogies of the Bible are frequently abbreviated by the omission of important names. In fact, abridgment is the general rule. W. H. G.

**20. Amram.** This can scarcely be the same person who is mentioned in v. 18, but his descendant and representative in the generation immediately preceding that of Moses. The intervening links are omitted, as is the rule where they are not needed for some special purpose, and do not bear upon the history. Between the death of Amram and the birth of Moses was an interval which can scarcely be brought within the limits assigned by any system of chronology to the sojourn in Egypt. Thus Tiele, quoted by Keil: "According to Numbers 3 : 27, in the time of Moses the Kohathites were divided into four branches, that of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel: their number amounted to 8600 males; of these the Amramites were about one fourth, *i.e.* more than 2000 males. This would be impossible were Amram the son of Kohath identical with Amram the father of Moses. We must therefore admit an omission of several links between the two." *Cook.*

**23. Elisheba.** Elizabeth, of the tribe of Judah, sister to Nahshon, prince of that tribe. While making prominent this high connection of Aaron, and recording the names of his sons, Moses makes no reference to his own family. B.

**26, 27.** This emphatic repetition shows the reason for inserting the genealogy. The names of Moses and Aaron are given twice and in a different order; in the 26th verse probably to mark Aaron as the elder in the genealogy, and in the 27th to denote the leadership of Moses. *Cook.*

**7 : 1. Made thee a god to Pharaoh.** Moses was to be God's representative in this affair, as magistrates are called *gods* because they are God's vicegerents, authorized to speak and act in his name. Aaron was to be to Moses what Moses himself was to God. The Most High does not scruple to clothe his humblest servants with a kind of divinity when he would make them oracles to his people or instruments of wrath to his enemies. *Bush.*

**3. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart.** We have seen the process already begun. The very patience and moderation which were calculated to subdue a will amenable to reason, only aroused the resistance and vengeance of Pharaoh. Every succeeding step in the procedure of God is dictated by a like consideration and forbearance. Though it be true, therefore, that God did harden Pharaoh's heart, yet it was by measures that would have disarmed the opposition, and commanded the acquiescence of an upright mind. M. [See close of this Section.]

**5.** The Egyptians were to be convinced that Jehovah was the true God by their own false gods falling before him: but this was a knowledge of discomfiture, not of conversion; Israel was by the same series of judgments to acquire the same knowledge; but this was to be a knowledge of conversion and attachment. God's sword is two-edged. *Alf.*

**6. So did they.** All unwillingness to obey, arising from unbelief or fear on their parts, had now ceased forever. **7. Old.** In this great turning-point of the history their age is mentioned (as before, their descent), in order to throw light on the narrative. The longevity of the human race still continued down to this time, though it becomes less and less. We are to regard Moses as in the full possession of vigor and energy. *Gerl.*

**9.** It is taken for granted that Pharaoh would demand a *miraculous* testimony in proof of their commission from God. The Scriptures go all along on the admitted principle that the performance *of miracles is the true seal of a divine commission.* *Bush.*

Moses was the first teacher of religion to whom the power of working miracles was granted. Miracles were not necessary to Adam or to Noah, as they each possessed sufficient evidence of the truths they taught: they were

not necessary to Abraham, as he was the reformer only of the religion of Noah. Moses was empowered to work miracles for the purpose of establishing a new dispensation. In the same manner, Christ, the prophet "like unto Moses," wrought his wonderful miracles to convince the world of the dissolution of the Levitical dispensation in favor of the Christian covenant. *Horæ Mosaicæ.*

**10.** The command to Moses and Aaron to work the miracle was predicated on the contingency of Pharaoh's asking it, and we must presume that this condition occurred. But the sacred writers study the extremest brevity upon all points that do not positively *require* specification. Up to this point Moses and Aaron had simply delivered their *message*, their *instructions*, to Pharaoh; the time had come for them to produce their *credentials*. *Bush.*

**11, 12.** And now commenced a contest, unequal it would at first appear, between two individuals of an enslaved people, and the whole skill, knowledge, or artifice of the Egyptian priesthood, whose sacred authority was universally acknowledged; their intimate acquaintance with all the secrets of nature extensive, their reputation for magical powers firmly established with the vulgar. The names of the principal opponents of Moses, Jannes and Jambres, are reported by Paul from Jewish tradition. *Milman.*——It was not to the secular power of the Egyptian monarch, but to his *gods*, that the gauntlet was thrown down. It was in the domain of miracles that the battle was to be fought—a domain in which Egypt regarded itself as peculiarly strong—for it was in Egypt, the land of conjurors and magicians, of interpreters of dreams and signs, that *magic*, that mysterious life-blood of heathenism, had put forth its marvellous power in its most fully developed forms. K.——From the nature of the case, the conflict could only be one of miracles; which, also from the nature of the case, must increasingly become miracles of judgment. *Kit.*—— Since the pride, the madness and the obstinacy of the king were indomitable, every door was closed until broken down miraculously, and by various means. In employing these miraculous means God chose more clearly to lay open his power. He wished this monument to exist of his singular love to his elect people. He wished to accustom his servants in all ages to patience, lest they should faint in their minds if he does not immediately answer their prayers and relieve their distresses. He wished to show that against all the strivings and devices of Satan, against the madness of the ungodly and all worldly hindrances, His hand must always prevail; and to leave no room to doubt that whatever we see opposing us will at length be overcome by Him. By detecting the illusions of Satan and the magicians, he would render his Church more wary, that she might carefully watch against such devices, and that her faith might continue invincible against all the machinations of error. These things must be attentively observed in the course of the narrative, if we desire to profit by it. *Calv.*

**11. Magicians.** "As there is no nation without religion, so there is also none without *magic*, which clings like a shadow to religion in all its forms." Magic, according to the notions prevalent among those who placed implicit confidence in it, is a power, acquired or inherited, which enables the possessor, by means of some secret art or science, to employ at will the forces of a supernatural world of spirits or deities, either for the purpose of finding out what is naturally hidden from human knowledge (*augury*), or of performing things, beyond the natural power of the human will (*magic*). K.—— The Egyptians were famous for legerdemain and for charming serpents; and the magicians having had notice of the miracle which they were expected to imitate, they might make provision accordingly, and bring live serpents, which they might have substituted for their rods. And though Aaron's serpent swallowed up their serpents, showing the superiority of the true miracle over the false, it might only lead the king to conclude that Moses and Aaron were more expert jugglers than Jannes and Jambres, who opposed them (2 Tim. 3 : 8). *Hales.*——It was necessary that these magicians should be suffered to exert the utmost of their power against Moses, in order to clear him from the imputation of *magic* or *sorcery;* for, as the notion of such an extraordinary art was rife not only among the Egyptians but all other nations, if they had not entered into this competition with him and been at length overcome by him, both Hebrews and Egyptians would have been apter to have attributed all his miracles to his skill in magic, than to the divine power. It was necessary, too, to confirm the faith of the wavering and desponding Israelites; by making them see the difference between Moses' acting by the power of God, and the sorcerers by the arts of jugglery. And it was necessary, in order to preserve them afterward from being seduced by any false miracles from the worship of the true God. It may be added: God permitted this in mercy to the Egyptians, that they might see that the gods in whom they trusted were

utterly incapable of saving them ; that they could not *undo* or *counteract* one of the plagues sent upon them. A. C.

Scripture not only regards magicians with abhorrence ; but brands their miracles as "*lying* wonders ;" and makes the teaching of false doctrine a test of the false pretence of supernatural power. And, when we pass from principles to facts, there is not a well-authenticated case of an apparent miracle, wrought by others than the Scripture witnesses for God, which excludes the possibility of imposture and leaves no room for doubt. In the case of the Egyptian magicians, their own exclamation, "This is the finger of God," involves the confession that they had been aided by no divine power, not even by their own supposed deities. P. S. ——Their power stopped where that of all dealers in legerdemain must stop—at the failure of proper materials with which to work. Egypt abounds with serpents ; blood could be easily procured in a quantity equal to the water that could then be found, on which the experiment was to be made ; and without difficulty they might have frogs in abundance from the river or the canals. But when Moses produced lice from the dust of the ground, the magicians, who had it not in their power to collect a sufficient number of these insects, were compelled to own this to be *the finger of God*. In our translation it is, indeed, said, that when Aaron had cast down his rod, and it became a serpent, the magicians also did in like manner with their enchantments ; but the words translated, *d d in like manner*, and *did so*, may indicate nothing more than *the attempt ;* for the very same words are employed to denote what they did in the *case of the lice*, in which they confessed that they had failed. It is to be observed, too, that the original term, rendered *their enchantments*, being derived from a root which signifies *to hide* or *cover*, fitly expresses the secret deceptions of *legerdemain* or *sleight of hand* to impose on the spectators. There is, therefore, no necessity for calling in the aid of supernatural agency to the magicians on this occasion, nor is it probable that they laid claim to such aid. *Bp. Gleig.*

On the position of magic at the court of the Pharaohs, M. Maspero makes the following statement : "Magic was in Egypt a science, and the magician one of the most esteemed of learned men. The nobles themselves, the prince Khamuas and his brother, were adepts in supernatural arts, and decipherers of magic formularies, in which they had an entire belief. A prince who was a sorcerer would nowadays inspire a very moderate sentiment of esteem. In Egypt the profession of magic was not incompatible with royalty, and the sorcerers of a Pharaoh had not uncommonly the Pharaoh himself for their pupil." The magical texts form a considerable proportion of the MSS. which have come down to us from ancient times, particularly from the nineteenth dynasty ; and the composition of some of them was ascribed to a Divine source. G. R.

**12. Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.** We do not read that they either attempted to prevent this, or to follow it by an imitation. By this, and by the serpent reverting to a rod when Aaron took hold of it, the superior nature of the power he exercised, and that it was far above all delusive art, was shown. *Kit.*

**13.** It should be, *And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened*, so that "he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had said," or foretold. The original is so rendered by all the ancient versions without exception, and by the most judicious modern translations. Our translators incorrectly render, "And *he* hardened Pharaoh's heart," inconsistently with their rendering of the same phrase, and of a phrase with the same construction afterward (7 : 22 ; 8 : 19 ; 9 : 7), for Pharaoh hardened his heart several times before God began to harden it. They seem to have been led into this error by the expression, "as the Lord had said," referring to the foregoing, "But I will harden his heart" (4 : 21), and "I will harden Pharaoh's heart" (7 : 3). But this did not take place till Pharaoh became obdurate and incorrigible (9 : 12). *Hales.*—— There is not in any of these three verses, the 13th, the 14th, and the 22d of this chapter, the least mention of any person by whom his heart was hardened. Nor is there any other hardening implied than what proceeded from his own settled resolution not to lose the service of the Israelites. *Bp. Patrick.*

### The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart.

Before Moses had returned into Egypt (Ex. 4 : 21), God had declared of Pharaoh, "I will harden his heart," placing this phase in the foreground, that Moses might be assured of God's overruling will in the matter. For a similar purpose, only much more fully expressed, God again announced to Moses. *before the commencement of the ten plagues* (7 : 3), "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." These are the first two statements about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. In both cases the agency is ascribed to God ; but in both cases the event

is yet future, and the announcement is only made in order to explain to Moses what his faith almost needed to know. *Twice ten times* in the course of this history does the expression *hardening* occur in connection with Pharaoh. Although in our English version only the word "harden" is used, in the Hebrew original three different terms are employed, of which one literally means *to make hard* or *insensible*, the other *to make heavy*, that is, unimpressionable, and the third, *to make firm* or *stiff*, so as to be immovable. Now it is remarkable, that of the twenty passages which speak of Pharaoh's hardening, exactly ten ascribe it to Pharaoh himself, and ten to God, and that in both cases precisely the same three terms are used. The ten passages in which the hardening is traced to Pharaoh himself are : Ex. 7 : 13 ("the heart of Pharaoh was firm" or "stiff") ; ver. 14 ("was heavy") ; ver. 22 ("firm") ; 8 : 15 ("made heavy") ; ver. 19 (was "firm") ; ver. 32 ; 9 : 7, 34 ("heavy") ; ver. 35 ("firm") ; 13 : 15 ("Pharaoh made hard," viz., his heart). The ten passages in which it is traced to the agency of God are : Ex. 4 : 21 ; 7 : 3 ; 9 : 12 ; 10 : 1, 20, 27 ; 11 : 10 ; 14 : 4, 8, 17.

With the exception of the two passages in which the Divine agency in hardening is beforehand announced to Moses for his instruction, the hardening process is during the course of the actual history, in the first place, traced only to Pharaoh himself. Thus, before the ten plagues, and when Aaron first proved his Divine mission by converting the rod into a serpent, "the heart of Pharaoh was hardened," that is, by himself (7 : 13, 14). Similarly, after each of the first five plagues (7 : 22 ; 8 : 15, 19, 32 ; 9 : 7), the hardening is also expressly attributed to Pharaoh himself. Only when still resisting after the sixth plague do we read for the first time, that "the Lord made firm the heart of Pharaoh" (9 : 12). But even so, space for repentance must have been left, for after the seventh plague we read again (9 : 34) that "Pharaoh made heavy his heart ;" and it is only after the eighth plague that the agency is exclusively ascribed to God.

Moreover, we have to consider the *progress* of this hardening on the part of Pharaoh, by which at last his sin became ripe for judgment. It was not only that he resisted the demand of Moses, even in view of the miraculous signs by which his mission was attested ; but that, step by step, the hand of God became more clearly manifest, till at last he was, by his own confession, "inexcusable." If the first sign of converting the rod into a serpent could in a certain manner be counterfeited by the Egyptian magicians, yet Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs. But after the third plague, the magicians themselves confessed their inability to carry on the contest, declaring : "This is the finger of God." If any doubt had still been left upon his mind, it must have been removed by the evidence presented after the fifth plague, when "Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead." Some of the Egyptians, at least, had profited by this lesson, and on the announcement of the seventh plague housed their cattle from the predicted hail and fire (9 : 20, 21). Lastly, after that seventh plague, Pharaoh himself acknowledged his sin and wrong (9 : 27), and promised to let Israel go (ver. 28). Yet after all, on its removal, he once more hardened his heart (ver. 35) ! Can we wonder that such high-handed and inexcusable rebellion should have been ripe for the judgment which appeared in the Divine hardening of his heart ? A. E.

From the various uses of the three Hebrew root-forms, the sullen stubbornness of Pharaoh appears attributable to himself directly, while in the expressions referring to God's action the main thought appears to be of encouragement and emboldenment. How this agrees with Pharaoh's renewed confidence following each release from judgment is obvious. The conclusions to be drawn may, perhaps, follow this train : 1. As seen in Egyptian History, Meneptah, the senile and obstinate Pharaoh, appears the man to play a weak and vacillating part in a critical time. 2. That God, designing to work mightily, predetermined to harden Pharaoh's heart, and that this design was carried into effect. 3. That the result was accomplished, not by an irresistible pressure of Divine Will upon Pharaoh's mind, of which there is no mention, as by the employment of wonders and signs, which, acting upon a better heart, would have wrought obedience and submission, but with the haughty spirit of Pharaoh, produced boldness and hardness of heart. 4. That in the hardening of his heart the responsibility rests upon the king. But for his own sullen obstinacy his calamities might have softened him, his reliefs have conquered him. But his stubbornness impelled him to extremities, and so, though God gave the occasion, Pharaoh himself was responsible for the fact. 5. And, finally, that no charge can be laid to the Almighty. As Dr. Hodge wisely says, "Some things He purposes to do, others he decrees to permit to be done. He effects good, he permits evil. He is the author of the one, but not of the other." *Summerbell.*

It was before the plagues began to be inflicted that the Lord announced to Moses that he would "harden Pharaoh's heart:" but it is a remarkable fact that the threat was constantly suspended, in order, as it appears, that Pharaoh might "set his heart" to God's judgments and be obedient to his word. Five plagues had already been wrought in his presence by "the finger of God," and he had previously hardened his heart against these unequivocal testimonies of Almighty power before the sentence of the Divine wrath was accomplished against him, "and the Lord hardened his heart, as he had spoken by Moses." This result was drawn down upon him by his own previous obstinacy and numerous provocations. That he hardened his own heart was his sin; that the Lord hardened it was his punishment. It was an act of righteous retributive justice upon an impenitent and obstinate sinner, who had despised the riches of God's mercy and forbearance and challenged the severity of his anger. *Bp. Mant.*

The expressions employed and the facts themselves lead to the conclusion, that hardening can only take place where there is a conflict between human freedom and divine *grace*. It can only result from a *conscious* and obstinate resistance to the will of God. It cannot take place where there is either ignorance or error. The hardening of the heart commences from the moment in which a man becomes clearly conscious that he is resisting God, and it increases in proportion as this consciousness becomes stronger and clearer, and the testimony of God comes home to his mind with greater vividness and power. The course of Pharaoh's history will show how truly this applied to him. Hardening, then, cannot even commence till some manifestation of *God* has been brought home to a man, with the express declaration and proof that it *is* such a manifestation. The moral condition which is the prerequisite of hardening, the soil from which it springs, is a man's own fault, the result of the free determination of his own will. But it is not without the co-operation of God, that this moral condition becomes actual hardness. Up to a certain point the will of God operates on a man in the form of mercy drawing to himself, he desires his *salvation;* but henceforth the mercy is changed into judicial wrath, and desires his *condemnation.* K.

The Gospel is "the savor of life unto life, and of death unto death," as one and the same savor is to some creatures refreshing, to others poisonous. But that the Gospel is unto death, is not a part of its original intention, but a consequence of perverse unbelief; but when this takes place, that it is unto death comes as a punishment from God. Thus the expression "hardening" presupposes an earlier condition when the heart was susceptible, but which ceased in consequence of the misuse of Divine revelations and gifts. As Pharaoh hardens himself, so God hardens him at the same time; and the prediction of this hardening would give Moses the assurance that the outbursts of his rage were all under the Divine control, and that the very punishment which befell him was ordained of God. *Gerl.*

Every wicked man, like Pharaoh, is under the dominion of sin: he is so voluntarily, but while under its power, the forms and the occasions of sin showing itself in action are not under the sinner's control, but are as the sinner himself, at God's disposal, and in subserviency to the ends of his moral government. The fact of a moral agent being a sinner, or the enemy of God, and so not willing to render the service due, cannot exempt him from it; and if he will not serve God in one capacity, he must be made to serve him in another. Now, the hardening of a sinner, either total or partial, is not the beginning of his sin, or the inducement of an evil state or disposition. God did not sinfully dispose any of his creatures, but they being so, he, nevertheless, employs them to carry out his purposes; while this hardening itself may be viewed as a punitive retribution, —a manifestation of righteous judgment. In the present instance such a manifestation was specially needed. A counteraction was required, both for the despondency of the Israelites and the arrogance of their oppressor. The opposition of Pharaoh, not less than his destruction, tended to glorify God; and his very obduracy called into action the Divine power, justice and grace. D. M.

First and foremost, we learn the insufficiency of even the most astounding miracles to subdue the rebellious will, to change the heart, or to subject a man unto God. Our blessed Lord himself has said of a somewhat analogous case, that men would not believe even though one rose from the dead. And his statement has been only too amply verified in the history of the world since his own resurrection. Religion is matter of the heart, and no intellectual conviction, without the agency of the Holy Spirit, affects the inmost springs of our lives. Secondly, a more terrible exhibition of the daring of human pride, the confidence of worldly power. and the deceitfulness of sin than that presented by the history of this Pharaoh can

scarcely be conceived. And yet the lesson seems to have been overlooked by too many! Lastly, resistance to God must assuredly end in fearful judgment. Each conviction suppressed, each admonition stifled, each loving offer rejected, tends toward increasing spiritual insensibility, and that in which it ends. It is wisdom and safety to watch for the blessed influences of God's Spirit, and to throw open our hearts to the sunlight of his grace. A. E.

## Section 86.

### FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD PLAGUES—MIRACLES.

EXODUS 7 : 14–25 ; 8 : 1–19.

7 : 14 AND the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is stubborn, he refuseth to let the people
15 go. Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning ; lo, he goeth out unto the water ; and thou
shalt stand by the river's brink to meet him ; and the rod which was turned to a serpent
16 shalt thou take in thine hand. And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD, the God of the
Hebrews, hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the
17 wilderness : and, behold, hitherto thou hast not hearkened. Thus saith the LORD, In this
thou shalt know that I am the LORD : behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand
18 upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish
that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink ; and the Egyptians shall loathe to
19 drink water from the river. And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy
rod, and stretch out thine hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their
streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, that they may become
blood ; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood
20 and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded ; and he
lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and
in the sight of his servants ; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.
21 And the fish that was in the river died ; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not
22 drink water from the river ; and the blood was throughout all the land of Egypt. And
the magicians of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments : and Pharaoh's heart
23 was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken. And Pharaoh
24 turned and went into his house, neither did he lay even this to heart. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink ; for they could not drink of the water
25 of the river. And seven days were fulfilled, after that the LORD had smitten the river.
8 : 1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the
2 LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold,
3 I will smite all thy borders with frogs : and the river shall swarm with frogs, which shall go
up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the
house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-
4 troughs : and the frogs shall come up both upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy
5 servants. And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy
rod over the rivers, over the streams, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come up upon
6 the land of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt ; and the
7 frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did in like manner with
8 their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt. Then Pharaoh called for
Moses and Aaron, and said, Intreat the LORD, that he take away the frogs from me, and from
9 my people ; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice unto the LORD. And Moses
said unto Pharaoh, Have thou this glory over me : against what time shall I intreat for thee,
and for thy servants, and for thy people, that the frogs be destroyed from thee and thy
10 houses, and remain in the river only? And he said, Against to-morrow. And he said, Be
it according to thy word : that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our
11 God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and

12 from thy people ; they shall remain in the river only. And Moses and Aaron went out from
Pharaoh : and Moses cried unto the LORD concerning the frogs which he had brought upon
13 Pharaoh. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses ; and the frogs died out of the
14 houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together in heaps :
15 and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart,
and hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken.
16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of
17 the earth, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so ; and
Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and there were
lice upon man, and upon beast ; all the dust of the earth became lice throughout all the land
18 of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they
19 could not : and there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto
Pharaoh, This is the finger of God : and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened
not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken.

The predicted trial, provoked through the daring of man, in measuring his strength against that of the living God, was to establish two facts for all ages and to all mankind In sight of Egypt (7 : 5) and of Israel (10 : 2) it was to evidence that God was Jehovah, the only true and living God, far above all power of men and of gods. This was one aspect of the judgments which were to burst upon Egypt. The other was, that he was the faithful Covenant-God who remembered his promises, and would bring out his people "with a stretched-out arm and with great judgments," to take them to himself for a people, and to be to them a God (6 : 1–8). These are the eternal truths which underlie the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. How Israel understood and taught them to their children, appears from many passages of Scripture, especially from Ps. 78 and 105. Nor is their application less suited to our wants. It exhibits alike the Law and the Gospel—the severity and the goodness of God—and may be summed up in that grand proclamation unto all the world : "Jehovah reigneth." A. E.

The results produced by these plagues were calculated to prepare the mind of Moses for the arduous work which lay before him in the leading of the tribes through the wilderness. That enterprise would task to the utmost his courage, his patience, and his faith ; and reluctant to undertake it at the first, he might have been often tempted to give it up in despair, had he not been fortified with the assurance which the sight of these plagues produced within him, that the Lord whom he served was indeed Jehovah, and had the resources of the universe at his command. Already the Lord was fulfilling to him the promise, "Certainly I will be with thee ;" and this foretaste of his faithfulness strengthened him ever afterward. A similar effect would be produced on the Hebrews themselves, who needed this quickening of their faith even more than Moses. They might forget what they had seen done for them by God in Egypt ; but when it was recalled to their recollection they would rise to faith in the majesty of God ; while the fact that they themselves experienced the effects of the first four plagues would tend to produce in them a fear of offending him who was "the great and dreadful God." W. M. T.

The first miracle is wrought to accredit the mission of the brothers ; it is simply credential, and unaccompanied by any infliction. Now come signs which show that the powers of nature are subject to the will of Jehovah, each plague being attended with grave consequences to the Egyptians, yet not inflicting severe loss or suffering ; then in rapid succession come ruinous and devastating plagues, murrain, boils, hail and lightning, locusts, darkness, and, lastly, the death of the firstborn. Each of the inflictions has a demonstrable connection with Egyptian customs and phenomena ; each is directly aimed at some Egyptian superstition ; all are marvellous, not for the most part as reversing, but as developing forces inherent in nature, and directing them to a special end. The effects correspond with these characteristics ; the first miracles are neglected ; the following plagues first alarm, and then for a season, subdue, the king, who does not give way until his firstborn is struck. Even that blow leaves him capable of a last effort, which completes his ruin and the deliverance of the Israelites *Cook.*

From the fruitlessness of the first sign, it was evident that Pharaoh would not learn wisdom, till he had been made to suffer. The great judgments and strong arm of the Lord therefore began at once to be manifested. Signs gave place to *plagues;* but the plagues still continued to be signs, which demonstrated the weakness of the gods of Egypt, and the complete supremacy of the God of Israel. The peculiarity of these

plagues was, that they possessed at the same time a natural and a supernatural character; and therefore the way was left perfectly open for the exercise of either faith or unbelief: the more so as even that which was supernatural, when compared with the similar efforts of the Egyptian sorcerers, might be set down by unbelief as the result of ordinary magic. The first two plagues were repeated by the sorcerers; but their weakness was manifested in the fact, that they could only increase the evil, and were unable to remove the plagues, or render them harmless. But at the third plague their magical art was entirely exhausted, and they were unable to continue even their miserable imitations. K.

The significance of these plagues consists in this, that well-known visitations occurred with unusual violence and in rapid succession—that they were called forth and ceased at Moses' word—that the Egyptian sorcerers at the outset can only *increase*, not *remove*, the visitation; and, finally, are obliged to declare themselves powerless and vanquished. This it is which proves to the Egyptians, under these circumstances, the mighty saying of Jehovah, "All the earth is mine." At length a plague is inflicted which exceeds all the former in its awfulness, since it leaves the ground of nature on which the others were exhibited—this is the slaughter of the firstborn. The number of the plagues is *ten*—the number of completeness—to signify the entire subjection of the land under its rightful Owner. *Gerl.*

The plagues were *miraculous*—yet not so much in themselves as in the time, the manner, and the measure in which they came upon Egypt. As so often, the Lord here employed ordinary natural events. The supernaturalness of the plagues consisted in their severity, their successive occurrence, their coming and going at the word of Moses, their partial extent, and the unusual seasons and manner in which they appeared. We also mark in them a regular arrangement and steady progress. Properly speaking, there were only nine plagues (3 × 3), the tenth "stroke" being in reality the commencement of judgment by Jehovah himself, when *he* went out "into the midst of Egypt" to slay its firstborn. Of these nine, the first three were in connection with that river and soil which formed the boast of Egypt, and the object of its worship. They extended over the *whole country*, and at the third the magicians confessed: "This is the finger of God." By them the land was laid low in its pride and in its religion. The other six came exclusively upon the Egyptians, as the Lord had said: "I will put a division between my people and thy people," "to the end that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah in the midst of the land." If the first three plagues had shown the impotence of Egypt, the others proved that Jehovah reigned even in the midst of Egypt. Finally, the three last "strokes" were not only far more terrible than any of the others, but intended to make Pharaoh know "that there is none like me in all the earth." To show that Jehovah, He is God; that He was such in the midst of Egypt; and finally, that there was none like Him in the midst of all the earth—or, that Jehovah was the living and the true God—such was the threefold object of these "strokes." As to the length of time occupied by all, it seems likely that from the first plague an interval of 10 months elapsed prior to the slaying of the firstborn. All this time Pharaoh was on his trial! A. E.

### The First Plague (7 : 17–25).

*The Water of the Nile turned into Blood.*

The *purport of this plague* is evident when we consider the sacredness of the Nile in the religious system of the Egyptians, the importance of the water of the river, as well as of its abundant supply of fish, and the extent to which the Egyptians depended upon these to supply their daily wants. On the monuments it is called the god Nile, the life-giving father of all that exists, the father of the gods, etc. The Egyptians were and still are enthusiastic in favor of the Nile water, which is in fact almost the only drinkable water in Egypt. The Turks enjoy the water so much, that they eat salt in order that they may be able to drink all the more of it. K.

**17. Thou shalt know that I am the Lord.** Pharaoh had asked, in a contemptuous manner, "Who is the Lord?" God therefore now bids Moses tell him, He would make him know that He is the almighty Lord of the world. *Bp. Patrick.*——One great design of these visitations, growing more awful in their progress, was to make Pharaoh *know* and confess that the God of the Hebrews was the Supreme Lord; to exhibit his power and his justice in the strongest light to "all the nations of the earth," and to execute judgment upon the Egyptians, and upon their gods. *Hales.*

**19.** The expressions in this verse show an accurate knowledge of Egypt, where the water system was complete at a period long before Moses. Lepsius describes it carefully. *Their streams* mean the natural branches of the Nile in Lower Egypt. The word *rivers* should rather

be *canals*. They were of great extent, running parallel to the Nile, and communicating with it by sluices, which were opened at the rise, and closed at the subsidence of the inundation. The word rendered "*ponds*" refers either to natural fountains, or more probably to cisterns or tanks found in every town and village. The "*pools*," lit. "gathering of waters," were the reservoirs, always large and some of enormous extent, containing sufficient water to irrigate the country in the dry season. *Cook.*——By stretching out his arm, and waving his rod in different directions over the land, the judgment was to become universal. The various branches of the Nile, the canals derived from it, the ponds and reservoirs, all were to exhibit the spectacle of the same hideous and nauseous transformation! *Bush.*

**21.** Pharaoh adores the life-sustaining power of nature, as embodied in the majestic river before him. The God of nature transforms the running water into a river of death before his eyes. It demonstrates, in the way that was most striking to the Hebrew and the Egyptian, that the God of Israel was the true and only God of heaven and earth, and that all other objects of worship were but the creatures of God or the works of men's hands. M.——**The fish died.** "We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely," said the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness, from which it is obvious that fish constituted no small part of the food of the country.

**22. The magicians did so.** The shallowness of their pretences was palpable in their proposing to show their skill by increasing an evil which was already intolerable. If they had had any confidence in their own art they would rather have attempted to turn the blood into water than the reverse. But they chose to ape the miracle of Moses, and though there is no evidence of their succeeding even in this, yet the result went to harden still further the obdurate heart of Pharaoh. *Bush.*

SECOND PLAGUE (8 : 1–15).

*Frogs Swarming from the River.*

**1, 2.** God again threatens the plague, before he inflicts it, that Pharaoh might know it came not by chance, but by His determinate counsel; and that he might prevent it by repentance and submission to the Divine commands. *Bp. Patrick.*

**5, 6.** All God's judgments stand ready, and wait but till they be called for. They need but a watchword to be given them. No sooner is the rod lift up, but they are gone forth into the world; presently, the waters run into blood, the frogs swarm about, and all the other troops of God come rushing in upon his adversaries. *Bp. H.*——In this case also, a creature honored by the Egyptians was made the instrument of their affliction, and they were compelled to regard it with disgust and horror. In the Egyptian mythology the frog was an emblem of man in embyro. There was also a frog-headed god and goddess,—the former supposed to be a form of Pthah, the creative power. The importance attached to the frog, in some parts of Egypt, is shown by its being embalmed and honored with sepulture in the tombs of Thebes. *Kit.*

**7. The magicians did so.** As in the two former cases, so here also we see no positive evidence that the magicians did anything more than go through certain preliminary ceremonies of jugglery which may perhaps have deceived the senses of the spectators, or they might have obtained them from among the multitudes produced by Moses and Aaron. *Bush.*——The jugglers of India will for a few pence do tricks with serpents far more wonderful than making them rigid so as to resemble staves; and any juggler could make water in a tank resemble blood; or, when the country was already swarming with frogs, could cover some place that had been cleared for the purpose with these reptiles, as if he had suddenly produced them. W. L. A.

**8.** The plague was too formidable to be despised, too mighty to be resisted, too extensive to be remedied. In the case of the waters turned into blood there was some mitigation of the scourge. They *could* procure pure water, though with great labor, by digging around the river. But from the plague of the frogs there was no respite or relief. In their houses, in their beds, at their tables, they were incessantly infested by these hated intruders. The judgment in its extremity is no longer endurable. Pharaoh is compelled to intercede for its removal. *Bush.*——The fact that Pharaoh was at first inclined to yield (and we have no reason to doubt his sincerity for a moment), is a proof that his heart was not yet thoroughly hardened, that he still possessed a certain amount of susceptibility for impressions from the testimony of God. But his relapse after the plague had been removed is also a proof that the process of hardening had previously commenced. K.

In the expression, "Intreat Jehovah, that he take away the frogs," Pharaoh distinctly admits the impotence of the magicians and acknowledges the supreme might of Jehovah. **9.** In the

responsive utterance of Moses, his generous and noble spirit not only foregoes reproach or taunt, but he honors the royalty of Pharaoh. B —— How is God's might glorified in the willing humility of his messenger, who, by allowing Pharaoh to fix the time, puts at the same time before him a proof of the greatness of God! *Gerl.*

**12-15. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses.** This is the second and decisive part of the miracle. The frogs suddenly die out of the land, are gathered in heaps or measures, and emit a grievous stench. Thus at the word of Moses they come, and at his word they go. There is a power here above nature. The God of nature is with Moses. He accomplishes what the magicians did not attempt. Pharaoh, however, thinks not of this demonstration of the divine power and mercy, but only of the "respite." On obtaining relief, his obduracy of heart returns. M.——The usual effect of the intermission of divine judgments upon obstinate offenders is here strikingly displayed. "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord" (Is. 26:10). The respite granted in order to lead the rebellious king to repentance serves but to embolden him in the career of disobedience, and harden his heart afresh. *Bush.*—— Not the least sense of gratitude for the favor—the mercy of removing the plague! How many of the sinners of our world have done this very thing! Stricken down with sickness, have they not begged for life and besought the prayers of the good, and promised the Lord that with restoring mercy they would give him their hearts and their lives? But when the respite came their vows were forgotten; their hearts were hardened. H. C.

THIRD PLAGUE (vs. 16–19).

*The Dust became Lice.*

**16. Stretch out thy rod.** The judgment now to be inflicted was to be inflicted without any previous warning. On the other hand, the fourth and fifth were preceded by a warning, while the sixth was not; again, the seventh and eighth were announced, but not the ninth; under the tenth the people were sent away. *Bush.*——The two preceding plagues fell upon the Nile. This fell on the earth, which was worshipped under the name Seb, its personification, regarded, in the pantheistic system of Egypt, as the father of the gods. *Cook.*——In the third plague, the Hebrew word for "lice" were better rendered *gnats*. Herodotus (B.C. 400) speaks of the great trouble which they cause and of the precautious used against them. Hartmann testifies: "All travellers speak of these gnats as an ordinary plague of the country." "So small as to be scarcely visible to the eye, their sting notwithstanding causes a most painful irritation. They even creep into the eyes and nose, and after harvest rise in great swarms from the inundated rice fields." (*Keil.*) H. C.

**18. The magicians did so.** That is, they tried the utmost of their skill, either to *produce* these insects, or to *remove* this plague; *but they could not*—no *juggling* could avail here. A. C.——With all their skill in magic, and with all their dexterity in deceiving spectators, they could not even succeed so far as they had already done in producing a specious counterfeit of the work of Moses. Had they hitherto performed real miracles, how came they to be baffled now? It cannot be a greater miracle to produce lice or gnats than to turn rods into serpents, water into blood, or to create frogs. Now, as the plague came without warning, they had no opportunity for contriving any expedient for imitating or impeaching the act of Moses. *Bush.*

The relative power of the Egyptian magicians in the beginning must serve to show in so much clearer light their entire impotence, as it was first exhibited in the little gnats, and then continued invariable. The contest was first intentionally carried on in a sphere to which the Egyptian magicians, as we certainly know with reference to the first sign, had hitherto shown their principal power. After they had there been vanquished, the scene was changed to a sphere, in which they could not at all further contend, and the doom which in this way came upon them fell through them upon their gods. *Hengs.*

**19.** The magicians try, but make an utter failure, and (what is to Pharaoh more provoking still) they frankly declare to him, "This is the finger of God." They retire from the contest, and leave Pharaoh to fight it out alone. They can help him no longer. He is apparently vexed and maddened, but not at all subdued. Rather, he rouses himself to greater desperation, for the record puts these points in the closest connection: the frank admission, "This is the finger of God;" and the stiffening of Pharaoh's rebellious will—"*And* Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he hearkened not unto them." H. C.——Who would not have thought that this confession of the magicians, which was a virtual avowal of the impotency of their

craft, together with the striking displeasure of the Almighty, manifested in the new calamity visited upon him, would have made the haughty monarch at least begin to waver in his resolution? But we read that he grew more and more obstinate. *Bush.*

Pharaoh saw real miracles. He never thought of questioning their genuineness; and if he had, the words of his own magicians, "This is the finger of God," would have reproved him. Yet he did not submit himself to Jehovah. He preferred his own royal pride to the humility of obedience; and so, the miracles notwithstanding, he resisted Jehovah. In the same way the Scribes and Pharisees saw Christ's miracles, but were not thereby induced to become his followers. They would not join his ranks, not because they disputed the reality of his miracles, but because they rebelled against the searching inwardness of his doctrines. And, in these days of ours, many men profess that they cannot believe in Jesus because of intellectual difficulties; when the truth is, that they will not believe in him because their lives are condemned by his words. Even if they were to see miracles wrought in his name before their eyes, it would make no difference to them; they do not wish to have him as their Lord, and that is all. For all its intellectual pretensiveness, infidelity springs from a heart that is wrong with God, far more frequently than from a head which is unusually acute. W. M. T.

### Points Respecting Miracles.

*Miracle* and *prophecy* are the two indispensable accompaniments, vehicles, and messengers of revelation. In each there is a manifestation to man of the fulness of the godhead; in the former of the power of God, in the latter of his wisdom. And through each the divine fulness enters into a covenant association with the history of humanity, co-operates in its development, and insures its safe arrival at its destined end. That end is the incarnation of God and the consequent entrance of the whole fulness of the divine essence, in a living and personal form, into an intimate and abiding union with man.

It is a striking fact, that *in the whole of the patriarchal history, and in the primeval history anterior to it, we do not meet with a single miracle performed by a man.* Where any miracles occur, they are performed solely and exclusively by God himself. We have in this fact a decisive argument against every mythical explanation of the patriarchal history, and a strong proof of the historical credibility of this portion of sacred history. This absence of miraculous powers and of the gift of prophecy in the patriarchal age, and the frequency with which God appeared, are easily explained as parts of God's regular plan for gradually revealing and communicating himself to the people of the covenant. It was an essential element in the gifts of miracles and prophecy, that the performer of miracles did not work them primarily *for himself*, but *for others*, and that the prophet did not proclaim the message from God *for himself*, but *for those around.* Now Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the solitary recipients of the divine call; God was related to them as a friend to a friend, and all the blessing, the protection, and the light, which he had to impart to them, were necessarily imparted directly to themselves, since there was no third person in existence who could mediate between the two. It was very different when the seed of Abraham had become a numerous people. Individuals could then be raised up, endowed with divine power and wisdom, to be the channels of power and light from God to the rest of the people. In fact, *it was necessary* that such persons should rise up, to be the typical representatives of the perfect mediatorship of the God-man, to whom the whole history of the covenant pointed, and at the same time to prepare the way for his coming, so that when he appeared, it might be as the ripe fruit, the complete and mature result of the entire history. Hence we find that Moses was the first prophet sent by God, and, more especially, the *first* worker of miracles in the history of the world. K.

*Moses was the first to bear a Divine commission to others. He was also the first to work miracles.* Miracles present to us the union of the Divine and the human. All miracles pointed forward to the greatest of all miracles, "the mystery of godliness, into which angels desire to look;" *the* union of the Divine with the human, in its fullest appearance in the Person of the God-Man. Thus in these two aspects of his office, as well as in his mission to redeem Israel from bondage and to sanctify them unto the Lord, Moses was an eminent type of Christ. "Wherefore" let us "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" A. E.

The miracles of Moses were twofold in character and purpose; one class designed to identify God to the people and be a witness to his

present hand, to confirm their faith in him as their Deliverer : the other designed by terrible inflictions of calamity, to force upon Pharaoh's hardened heart the conviction of Jehovah's power and compel him to let God's people go. These two objects were to be accomplished ; the Hebrew people were to be assured that their own God had indeed come ; Pharaoh must be made to know who Jehovah is ; how fearful the judgments of his uplifted hand are ; and how vain it is for mortals, though on thrones of human power, to lift up themselves against the Almighty. H. C.

The historian intends to produce the impression that these plagues were miraculously inflicted. The matter to be established was the personal existence and supremacy of Jehovah. The ground on which the demand of Moses was based was not that the Hebrews had a right to their civil freedom, though that was true, but that Jehovah had the prior claim to their service, and that Pharaoh too was bound to yield him obedience. The great reason constantly assigned by God for Pharaoh's submission to him was, "*I am Jehovah.*" This involved an assertion of his sovereignty over the universe ; and he could prove that he was the upholder of the common order of nature only by deviating from that order in certain previously indicated instances. If there be an intelligent and personal Cause sustaining the common order of nature, it is just as possible for him to deviate in exceptional cases, and for a worthy end, from that order, as it is for him to carry it continuously on. So, if the being of God be admitted at all, the possibility of miracles is involved in that admission. But Pharaoh admitted in the abstract the being of Deity, only he contended that the god whom he worshipped was the true God ; and now by this series of miracles Jehovah demonstrated that He alone is the ruler of the universe. W. M. T.

When God sent Moses to deliver a new law to the Israelites, he attended him with a miraculous power, to testify it to be his will that what Moses delivered should be entertained. So the miracles performed by Christ were a confirmation of his commission. They were miracles of that nature that had not been performed by any prophet before him. And those miracles done by him which were of the same kind with those done by the prophets of old, were done with more ease, and in a way of absolute authority. These were such credentials, that the very devils knew him to be the Messiah, the Sent of God. But when a doctrine is settled and a Church established, God forbears those extraordinary works, as he did the raining down manna after the Israelites' entrance into Canaan, where they might have provision in an ordinary way of providence. We have now rational ways to introduce us to a belief of the Christian doctrine ; and hence miracles, as of old, have ceased. *Charnock.*

*Creation* is God's bringing his creatures into existence. *Ordinary Providence* is God's sustaining and governing all his creatures and all their actions after they are created. This ordinary providence always works through natural causes and according to the uniformities of natural law. The *supernatural working of God* embraces all of his various modes of acting upon or through his creatures, which produces effects beyond their natural powers to produce, and different from the uniform method of natural law This includes special interventions, gracious operations, revelations, and specifically, *miracles.*

"Miracle," as a technical word, refers only to a class of supernatural events alleged to have occurred in connection with the origin of the Jewish and of the Christian religions, which are recorded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures as a mode of divine attestation to the divine origin of these religions. We exclude from this term, miracle : 1. All spiritualistic phenomena—ghost-flitting, spirit-rapping, demoniac possession or other manifestation of merely superhuman power. 2. Extraordinary providences, as the draught of fishes and flight of quails mentioned in Scripture. 3. All possible special intervention and modification of the ordinary course of providence in the spiritual education of souls. 4. All the gracious acts of God in the spiritual sphere, regenerating and sanctifying the souls of his people. 5. His supernatural operations in the minds of his prophets, revealing truth, disclosing future events and inspiring them as public teachers.

The "Miracle" should be defined thus : An event, occurring in the material world, obvious to the senses, of such a nature that it can be rationally referred only to the immediate act of God as its direct cause, accompanying a teacher of religion sent from God, and designed to authenticate his divine commission. *A. A. Hodge.*

If men are blind to God and divine things, having chosen not to retain him in their knowledge ; so that the works of nature and his ordinary Providence do not bring him before their minds—so that he is hidden from them ; how shall he make himself known? In what other way than by miracles, or by a supernatural manifestation? When the heavens no longer

declare his glory, nor the firmament his handiwork, when the Creation and secondary causes are falsely looked upon as self supported and ultimate, how shall he reveal himself save by a supernatural incoming into the order of nature and of history, by which his presence shall be undeniably recognized? The miracle in some form is the only conceivable mode of revelation to men who see not God in the ordinary course of things, or to the world as it is, under the dominion of sin. Miracle and revelation are interchangeable terms. To believe in the possibility of a miracle is simply to believe in God —in fact, every one does believe in a miracle who believes in a creator. To believe in the fact of a miracle, simply requires that an adequate motive for one should exist; that a sufficient motive should be presented to the Divine benevolence. Grant such a motive, and every presumption against the occurrence of a miracle disappears. To suppose that the power of God is restrained by the Creation, or that his benevolence is shut up to the usual methods of blessing mankind by the regular operation of natural causes, is to deny God. Belief or disbelief in the miracles depends at last on whether you deem the occasion for them, or the need of light and help from above, to be a real and sufficient occasion; whether, in short, you believe and think it credible and desirable that a benevolent God should reveal himself to mankind. Belief or disbelief is thus contingent on the moral views and the moral state, the opinion which men have of their character and spiritual wants, and the sense they have of the evil and danger of being separated from God. It is here that the Bible places the grounds of faith and of unbelief. *G. P. Fisher.*

God can override every force by a higher force; but this higher force is no created energy, but his creative fiat – his will – whose function is to suspend every other force, and to control every law. Every disturbance that might occur in consequence he can avoid by the same energy by which he suspends any natural force. Should he arrest a planet in its orbit, he could provide all the compensations that might be required to avert or check or turn aside the results that might otherwise ensue. His hand is not only on the driving lever that starts and stops and regulates the engine, but his presence and spirit are in all the wheels, and pulsate in that vast organization which we call the universe of matter and spirit. For God to suspend a force or break a law, is, however, never a lawless or an unreasonable act. Every miracle is performed for some reason. No force of nature is ever suspended, no law is broken, except to reveal a present and personal God, and to enforce a sense of his presence which is yet above nature, by some manifestation through nature, in order that some impressive moral or spiritual lesson may be conveyed.

It follows that a story of a miracle is credible whenever a sufficient reason for its occurrence can be given or supposed. We believe that a miracle is credible whenever it is required for any worthy end which God may propose, for the same reason that we believe in the unbroken reign of law in the ordinary routine of nature, because of the ends which this dominion of law will subserve. We believe that the laws of nature may be broken when the occasion requires, for the same reason that we believe them to be unbroken in the ordinary routine of life. Not only is a miracle credible, but it becomes probable, when the occasion justifies it. The end proposed in a miracle may not only justify our reason in believing it, it may even *require* this faith of both reason and conscience. Is what is usually called nature the whole of the universe? Or if you enlarge the conception of nature, so as to take into it spiritual beings who are immortal, are all their interests limited to power, wealth, enjoyment, to social affection, culture, art, and civilization, and even to character—if you leave out of *character* responsibility to one's self and to God, with its results of confirmed sin or confirmed holiness—are these all that man *should care* for, or all that God *does* care for? If there is more, this outweighs all the rest. If man is responsible, then he is guilty and weak, and needs forgiveness and help. He also needs the assurance of both in such form that he cannot doubt the reality and cannot help being moved by the love. In one word, he needs the supernatural and the miraculous Christ, just the Christ of the gospel story, and he needs him more than anything and everything besides. If there is a living and loving God, shall he not supply this want? If, in order to supply it, he must meet man with such miraculous works as break through the order of nature in order to manifest his presence, shall we believe the story the less or the more because it records supernatural deeds? Well might Coleridge say, "Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the phrase—make a man feel his need of Christianity, and give him right conceptions of what Christianity is, and he cannot but believe it to be from God, and this by a most natural and rational judgment." *N. Porter.* [See New Testament, vol. 1, Section 177.]

# Section 87.

## FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH PLAGUES.

EXODUS 8 : 20-32 ; 9 : 1-35.

8 : 20 AND the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh ;
lo, he cometh forth to the water ; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people
21 go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send
swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy
houses : and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the
22 ground whereon they are. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my
people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there ; to the end thou mayest know that I
23 am the LORD in the midst of the earth. And I will put a division between my people and
24 thy people : by to-morrow shall this sign be. And the LORD did so ; and there came
grievous swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses : and in
25 all the land of Egypt the land was corrupted by reason of the swarms of flies. And Pharaoh
26 called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And
Moses said, It is not meet so to do ; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyp-
tians to the LORD our God : lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before
27 their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilder-
28 ness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us. And Pharaoh said, I
will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness ; only ye shall
29 not go very far away : intreat for me. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I
will intreat the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants,
and from his people, to-morrow : only let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not let-
30 ting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and in-
31 treated the LORD. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses ; and he removed the
swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people ; there remained not
32 one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.
9 : 1 Then the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD,
2 the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to
3 let them go, and wilt hold them still, behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle
which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the herds,
4 and upon the flocks : *there shall be* a very grievous murrain. And the LORD shall sever be-
tween the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt : and there shall nothing die of all that
5 belongeth to the children of Israel. And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To-morrow
6 the LORD shall do this thing in the land. And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and
7 all the cattle of Egypt died : but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one. And
Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not so much as one of the cattle of the Israelites dead.
But the heart of Pharaoh was stubborn, and he did not let the people go.
8 And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the
9 furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. And it shall
become small dust over all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with
10 blains upon man and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. And they took ashes
of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh ; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven ; and
11 it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast. And the magicians
could not stand before Moses because of the boils : for the boils were upon the magicians,
12 and upon all the Egyptians. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hark-
ened not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.
13 And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh,
and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that
14 they may serve me. For I will this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon
thy servants, and upon thy people ; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in
15 all the earth. For now I had put forth my hand, and smitten thee and thy people with
16 pestilence, and thou hadst been cut off from the earth : but in very deed for this cause

have I made thee to stand, for to shew thee my power, and that my name may be declared
17 throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt
18 not let them go? Behold, to-morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous
19 hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the day it was founded even until now. Now
therefore send, hasten in thy cattle and all that thou hast in the field ; *for* every man and
beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come
20 down upon them, and they shall die. He that feared the word of the LORD among the
21 servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses : and he that
regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field.
22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may
be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the
23 field, throughout the land of Egypt. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven :
and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down unto the earth ; and the LORD
24 rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail,
25 very grievous, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And
the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and
26 beast ; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only
27 in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail. And Pharaoh
sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time : the
28 LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Intreat the LORD ; for there hath been
enough of *these* mighty thunderings and hail ; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no
29 longer. And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread
abroad my hands unto the LORD ; the thunders shall cease, neither shall there be any more
30 hail ; that thou mayest know that the earth is the LORD'S. But as for thee and thy ser-
31 vants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God. And the flax and the barley were
32 smitten : for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolled. But the wheat and the
33 spelt were not smitten : for they were not grown up. And Moses went out of the city
from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD : and the thunders and hail
34 ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. And when Pharaoh saw that the
rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his
35 heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let
the children of Israel go ; as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

### THE FOURTH PLAGUE (8 : 20–32).

*Swarms of Flies.*

Some may inquire, why did God punish the country by such minute and contemptible animals as frogs, lice, flies, rather than by bears, lions, leopards, or other kinds of savage beasts, which prey on human flesh? or if not by these, why not by the Egyptian asp, whose bite is instant death? First, God chose rather to *correct* than to destroy the inhabitants ; for if he desired to annihilate them utterly, he had no need to have made use of *animals* as his auxiliaries, but of the divinely inflicted evils of famine and pestilence. Next, *men*, when they war, seek the most powerful aid to supply their own weakness ; but GOD, the highest and greatest power, who stands in need of nothing, if at any time he chooses to employ instruments to inflict chastisement, chooses not the strongest and greatest, but rather the mean and the minute, which he endues with irresistible power to chastise offenders. *Philo.*

**21–23.** The first three plagues were inflicted alike on the Egyptians and Hebrews. But as this may have contributed to prevent the Egyptians from seeing the finger of God in the previous plagues, a distinction was henceforth to be made, and the land of Goshen to be exempted from the calamities still impending.

**24–27.** It is evident that each successive plague thus far exceeded in intensity that which went before it, and so grievous was the present, that with a view to its removal Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and proposed to them a *compromise.* Unable to bear the tormenting scourge, and yet unwilling to resign his grasp of his Hebrew bondmen, by *a half-way measure* he would secure himself from injury in both respects. He consents that they should sacrifice to their God, provided they would do it in the land of Egypt. The reply of Moses was prompt and decided. Implicit obedience was his only rule of conduct, and by adhering in the most inflexible manner to the expressed will of Jehovah, the name of Moses has come down to the latest generation honored by the testimony of pre-eminent *fidelity*—"Moses was

*faithful* in all his house." Far from accepting this concession, he tells Pharaoh there is no alternative. His *entire requisition* must be complied with. *Bush.*——Nor is there little praise due to the firmness of Moses, who boldly and unreservedly rejected the pretended moderation of the tyrant, because it would have interfered with the will of God. He declares that the Israelites would do no otherwise than as God had prescribed. *Calv.*

**28.** The demand does not refer to a journey to Sinai, which would have occupied much longer time. Pharaoh grants the permission, not however without imposing a condition which would have enabled him to take effectual measures to prevent the final emigration of the Israelites. The power of the Pharaohs extended far beyond the frontier, especially on the road to Palestine. *Cook.*——Whether he was henceforth to lose entirely so considerable and so useful a part of the population of the kingdom, was the Egyptian king's view of the question ; to which is to be added the apprehension that becoming thus independent of their control, they might one day resolve themselves into a very dangerous hostile power on the frontiers, whether in the desert as pastoral nomads, or as a settled people in Palestine. Viewing the matter thus, as the Egyptian king unquestionably did, his conduct, though no more excusable, is somewhat less surprising. *Bush.*

**29.** How ready God is to accept sinners' submissions. Pharaoh does but say, *Entreat for me* (though it is with regret that he humbles so far), and Moses promises immediately, *I will entreat the Lord for thee ;* that he might see what the design of the plague was, not to bring him to ruin, but to bring him to repentance. With what pleasure did God say (1 K. 21 : 29), *Seest thou how Ahab humbles himself?* H.——**Deal deceitfully.** It was an act of extraordinary boldness openly and before the tyrant's face to reproach him for his falsehoods, and at the same time to threaten him with punishment unless he desisted from them. *Calv.*

**30-32.** The issue of all was, that God graciously removed the plague (vs. 30, 31), but Pharaoh perfidiously returned to his hardness, and *would not let the people go* (v. 32). His pride would not let him part with such a flower of his crown as his dominion over Israel was, nor his covetousness with such a branch of his revenue as their labors were. H.——By a law of our nature the insensibility of conscience grows apace with every act of defiance to its suggestions ; and if the warnings of one adverse providence have failed to impress, another and another, each more fitted to appall and arrest than the former, may fall short of its moral efficacy for turning us from the evil of our ways. When Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he fell from his promises and professions, and relapsed into his former hardness, and—as is the case with all backsliding—into a greater hardness than before. T. C.

### The Fifth Plague (9 : 1–7).

*Cattle destroyed by a Murrain.*

The word murrain, *i.e.* a great mortality, exactly expresses the meaning. This terrible visitation struck far more severely than the preceding, which had caused distress and suffering ; it attacked the resources of the nation. **3. The camels.** These animals are only twice mentioned, here and in Gen. 12 : 16, in connection with Egypt. In this passage the enumeration of cattle is studiously complete. *Cook.*

We may observe a particular scope and meaning in this calamity with regard to the Egyptians, which would not have existed in respect to any other people. It is well known that they held in idolatrous reverence the lion, wolf, dog, cat, ape, and goat. But they had gods which they held in still greater reverence than these ; such were the ox or steer ; the cow and heifer ; and the ram. Among these the Apis and Mnevis are well known ; the former, a sacred bull adored at Memphis ; and the latter at Heliopolis. There was also a cow or heifer which had the like honors at Momemphis. To these may be added the goat at Mendes, though perhaps not so celebrated as the others. This judgment, therefore, upon the kine of Egypt, was very significant in its execution and purport. The Egyptians not only suffered a severe loss, but, what was of far greater consequence, they saw the representative of their deities, and their deities themselves, sink before the "God of the Hebrews." There is reason to think that both the camel and ass were held sacred, which were involved in the same calamity. Hence it is said by the sacred writer, "Upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments" (Num. 33 : 4). To the Israelites, the worship of the Egyptians must at this time have appeared in a contemptible light, and their gods despicable. Their separation too and exemption during these evils must have had still greater weight. It rendered them more ready to quit a people from whom they were so distinguished. *Bryant.*

**5. To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land.** The fixing of the

time in this manner would make the judgment when it came the more remarkable. "*We* know not what any day will bring forth, and therefore cannot say what we will do to-morrow, but God can."

**6. All the cattle of Egypt died.** That is, some of all sorts; not absolutely each and every one; for we find (vs. 19, 25) some remaining which were smitten by a subsequent plague. This peculiar usage of the word "all," as denoting *some of all kinds*, instead of the *absolute totality* of the number spoken of, is of great importance to a right understanding of the sacred Scriptures throughout. *Bush.*

THE SIXTH PLAGUE (vs. 8–12).

*Boils upon Man and Beast.*

This marks a distinct advance and change in the character of the visitations. Hitherto the Egyptians had not been attacked directly in their own persons. It is the second plague which was not preceded by a demand and warning, probably on account of the peculiar hardness shown by Pharaoh in reference to the murrain. *Cook.*——Hitherto the Lord has tried to move the heart of the king by a series of external privations and penalties. The want of water, the presence of a loathsome reptile, the creeping and biting of a nauseous insect, the fierce stinging of the fly swarm, and the loss occasioned by the pestilence among the cattle, have been all in vain. Now the life is menaced. M.

**9. A boil breaking forth with blains.** The word rendered boil is derived from "burning inflammation," and is used elsewhere of plague boils, of the leprosy, and elephantiasis. Here it means probably a burning tumor or carbuncle breaking out in pustulous ulcers. *Cook.*

**11. The magicians could not stand before Moses.** They had probably hitherto continued to linger about the person of Pharaoh, confirming him in his obstinate refusal to let the people go, and pretending that though Moses had thus far performed works beyond their skill, yet they should doubtless be too hard for him at last; but now, being seized with these loathsome and painful ulcers, they were utterly confounded and henceforth no more heard of. *Bush.*——Thus they were driven the field. Their power was restrained before, but they continued to confront Moses and confirm Pharaoh in his unbelief, till now they were forced to retreat and could not stand before Moses, to which the apostle refers (2 Tim. 3 : 9), when he says, that their *folly was made manifest unto all men.* H.

**12.** God had threatened that he *would* harden Pharaoh's heart, but we do not, until we come to the present passage, find it expressly said that he *did* harden it. Not that God, by a positive act, *created* any hardness of heart in Pharaoh, or that he immediately put forth any influence to render him callous and incapable of right feeling. He had before hardened his own heart by resisting both the grace and the wrath of heaven. *Bush.*——Now "the Lord," for the first time, "hardened the heart of Pharaoh," after he had so repeatedly hardened it himself, "and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had foretold unto Moses." Though Pharaoh probably felt the scourge of the "boil," as well as his people, it did not soften nor humble his heart. And when he wilfully and obstinately turned away from the light, and shut his eyes against the luminous evidences vouchsafed to him of the *supremacy* of the GOD OF THE HEBREWS, and had twice broken his promise, when he was indulged with a respite, and dealt *deceitfully*, he became a just object of punishment. And such is the usual and the righteous course of his providence; when nations or individuals despise the warnings of heaven, abuse their best gifts, and resist the means of grace, "God then delivers them over to a *reprobate* or undiscerning mind" (Rom. 1 : 28; Eph. 4 : 19). *Hales.*——Before, he had *hardened his own heart*, and resisted the grace of God; and now, God justly gave him up to his own heart's lusts, to a reprobate mind, and strong delusions, permitting Satan to blind and harden him, and ordering everything from henceforward so as to make him more and more obstinate. *Wilful* hardness is commonly punished with *judicial* hardness. If men shut their eyes against the light, it is just with God to close their eyes. Let us dread this as the sorest judgment a man can be under on this side hell. H. (Sec. 85.)

When we have accounted for the hardening of Pharaoh's heart satisfactorily on the one principle—the well-known proclivities and activities of a proud, stubborn human heart, it is entirely unphilosophical to bring in another principle, viz. the miraculous, immediate, direct action of Almighty Power. When we have proved the former power adequate to produce all the results, we have virtually precluded the latter. There can be no reason whatever for assuming a joint, co-ordinate action of both the natural laws of the human mind and of the supernatural power of God. If the former suffices, the latter is uncalled for. Miracles are never to be assumed where non-miraculous agency is fully adequate. It is of no use for us

to find fault with the way in which the Scriptures speak of God's hand in the existence of sin. There is no special mystery about it. It certainly does not involve the least moral obliquity on God's part ; and it is therefore every way prudent and wise to interpret such language in harmony with the common-sense of the case and with the well-known character of God. H. C.——Merciful warnings harden men every day. They were full, frequent, *sincere*, and earnest in Pharaoh's case ; and sustained by prodigies of power which should have secured conviction. Favorable opportunities of repenting and returning to duty harden men every day. But they are surely granted in mercy. The withdrawing of His Spirit, oft resisted, is a terrible but righteous procedure. Hardness of heart inevitably ensues. *An.*

### The Seventh Plague (vs. 13–35).

*Thunder, Hail and Fire.*

With this begins the last series of plagues, which differ from the former both in their severity and their effects. Each produced a temporary, but real change in Pharaoh's feelings. The plagues which precede appear to have been spread over a considerable time ; the first message of Moses was delivered after the early harvest of the year before, when the Israelites could gather stubble, *i.e.* in April and May : the second mission, when the plagues began, was probably toward the end of June, and they went on at intervals until the winter ; this plague was in February. *Cook.*

**13–15.** Six times the demand had been made in vain, yet Moses must make it the seventh time, *Let my peop'e go* (v. 13). A most dreadful message Moses is here ordered to deliver to him, whether he will hear, or whether he will forbear. He must tell him that he is marked for ruin ; that he now stands as the butt at which God would shoot all the arrows of his wrath. H.——If lesser judgments do not do their work, God will send greater. Moses is charged to tell Pharaoh that, in the plagues that remained to be inflicted there would be a kind of concentrated terribleness, so that each one should come upon him as if with the accumulated weight of all the rest. They were to be such plagues as should not only endanger the body, but *smite the heart*, the inward spirit with such terror, that it would seem as if the whole magazine of heaven's vengeance were opened upon him and his people. This seems to be what is intended by the language—"I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart," where we are probably to understand by "this time," the time occupied by the whole ensuing course of judgments that should finally end in the utter destruction of Pharaoh. *Bush.*

**15, 16.** The reason why God did not at once destroy Pharaoh and his people is thus stated by the Lord Himself : "For now if I had stretched forth my hand and smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence, then hadst thou been cut off from the earth. But now in very deed for this cause have I let thee stand (made thee stand, raised thee up), for to show in thee my power (perhaps, to let thee see or experience it—this is the first reason ; the second)—and that my Name may be declared throughout all the earth." That this actually was the result we gather from Chap. 15 : 14. Nay, the tidings spread not only among the Arabs, but long afterward among the Greeks and Romans, and finally, through the Gospel, among all nations of the earth. A. E.

The Greek translates very justly, "For this cause thou hast been preserved :" and most of the versions express the true meaning of the passage better than our English translation. The reason of the words and the true meaning of them is this : Moses had wrought several miracles before Pharaoh without effect. Hereupon he delivers him a severer message, threatening that God would send all his plagues upon his heart, to smite him with pestilence and to cut him off from the earth : and, "indeed," continues he, speaking still in the name of God, "for this cause have I preserved thee hitherto, to show in thee my power :" that is, I had cut thee off sooner for thy obstinacy, but that I intended to make my power over thee more conspicuous. So that the words signify, that Pharaoh was hitherto preserved by the forbearance of God to be a more remarkable example ; not that he was born to be brought to ruin. *Shuckford.*

The issue is to be joined between Jehovah and his people with the great central civilization of earth, with a view to recall the world to a knowledge of the true God. It is important to the interests of the world and the interests of God's truth that the real wickedness of Pharaoh shall be brought out, and the justice of God's dealings with him be evinced. Hence the apostle, in Romans, cites this case as the grand historical illustration of the sovereignty of God, in glorifying himself by the destruction of the impenitent as well as by the salvation of the believing penitent. It is no question here of ethics as between man and man from the human point of view, but of the purposes and the honor of God from a divine point of view.

S. R.——It was a most signal and memorable instance of the power God has to humble and bring down the proudest of his enemies. Everything concurred to signalize this, that God's name, that is, his incontestable sovereignty, his irresistible power, and his inflexible justice might be declared throughout all ages while the earth remains. H.

From this and other express declarations we know that the Hebrew institutions were not designed for the exclusive benefit of the Hebrew people. Solomon prays (1 K. 8 : 60) that God would "maintain the cause of his people Israel at all times, that all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah is God, and that there is none else." According to this decisive testimony, the Hebrew history and institutions from the very first stood connected with the communication of the knowledge of the true God to all the people of the earth. E. C. W.

**18-21.** Only one day for thought and repentance was granted to Pharaoh before the *seventh stroke* descended. It consisted of such hail as had never been seen in Egypt, mingled with thunder and fiery lightning. The cattle in Egypt are left out to graze from January to April, and such of the Egyptians as gave heed to the warning of Moses withdrew their cattle and servants into shelter, and so escaped the consequences ; the rest suffered loss of men and beasts. That some "among the servants of Pharaoh" "feared the word of Jehovah" (v. 20) affords evidence of the spiritual effect of these "strokes." A. E.

**22-25.** In Egypt hail is unknown, and rain is a rare phenomenon. A storm in which these elements were combined with prodigious power —the rain in floods, hailstones of prodigious size and force, thunder in awful crashes, and lightning that ran like fire along the ground – must have been a most astonishing and dreadful spectacle to the Egyptians. Nor was the terror all. The actual calamity inflicted was most serious. Those who, despite the warning, left their cattle abroad in the fields, saw them stricken dead by the hailstones, and it also smote every bush, and broke every tree of the field. *Kit.*

**27.** Pharaoh's confession reaches further than before, even to the acknowledgment of personal guilt : Jehovah is in the right,—he and his people in the wrong. But it is only *this time :* he does not include the former times. It is a touch of nature in the narrative, that the spirit of Pharaoh is dismayed by the awful and to him unusual terrors of the thunderstorm. At such times even the bravest and hardest are frequently affrighted by an unaccountable panic. *Alf.*

**28.** Amid all these storms Pharaoh sleepeth ; till the voice of God's mighty thunders, and hail mixed with fire, roused him up a little. Now, as betwixt sleeping and waking, he starts up and says, "God is righteous, I am wicked ; Moses, pray for us ;" and presently lays down his head again. God hath no sooner done thundering, than he hath done fearing. All this while you never find him careful to prevent any one evil, but desirous still to shift it off when he feels it ; never holds constant to any good motion ; never prays for himself, but carelessly wills Moses and Aaron to pray for him ; never yields God his whole demand, but would get a release with the cheapest : first, "They shall not go ;" then, "Go and sacrifice, but in Egypt ;" next, "Go sacrifice in the wilderness, but not far off ;" after, "Go ye that are men ;" then, "Go you and your children only ;" at last, "Go all save your sheep and cattle." *Bp. H.*——Pharaoh's repentance here was destitute of humiliation. There was no real humbling of himself ; and there was no renunciation of his sin. His cry was always, "Take away the frogs, take away the hail," but never "take away the sin." And it was temporary. He no sooner felt it, than it was dissipated, and disappeared. J. C.

**29.** It was not Pharaoh's personal intention or change of heart on which the matter turned ; but as king he stood on one side—God on the other : and his public position before the world was the point to be regarded. As he now gave God the honor and humbled himself under His hand, immediately the removal of the plague follows. So now is a national blessing the certain fruit of an open confession of the service due to the true God, on the part of the rulers. *Gerl.*

**31. The flax was bolled.** In blossom. This marks the time. In the north of Egypt the barley ripens and flax blossoms about the middle of February. *Cook.*

**33.** Although Pharaoh's confession was insincere, yet as he *publicly* honored God by his humiliation, the plague is immediately removed. Thus, frequently in the after history of the Old Testament, threatened evil was withheld and even great personal and national blessings bestowed, upon the open confession of the true God by kings and peoples. And this principle of the Divine dealing with nations has ever since obtained. B.

**34. The thunders and the hail ceased.** The prayer of Moses was in this

case invested with a power like that of Elias, and the two witnesses of the Apocalypse, to open and shut heaven, and yet the mercy now accorded to Pharaoh tended as little to soften his heart as the previous judgment had done. The language implies that his increased hard ness of heart was an increased measure of guilt: "He sinned yet more and more, and hardened his heart;" *i.e* sinned by hardening his heart. God's foretelling the result, therefore, and permitting it, did not go to lessen his criminality. *Bush.*——The mercy of God, which should have led him to repentance, had a contrary effect upon him, and made him more obstinate. For an hardened heart is neither cut by compunction, nor moved by entreaties, nor yields to threatenings, nor feels the smart of scourges. It is ungrateful to benefactors, treacherous to counsels, sullen under judgments, fearless in dangers, forgetful of things past, negligent of things present, and improvident for the future. All these bad qualities seem to have concentred in Pharaoh. It was, therefore, entirely agreeable to the rules of Divine justice, when nothing would reclaim this wicked king, when even that which wrought upon the magicians made no impression on him, to let his crime become his punishment, and to leave him to eat the bitter fruit of his own ways and to be filled with his own devices. *Stackhouse.*

True repentance has, as its constituent elements, grief and hatred of sin, and also an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ. It hates the sin, and not simply the suffering or penalty; and it hates the sin most of all because it has discovered God's love. How much of our penitence is like this of Pharaoh! and how many are saints on a sick-bed, but as wicked as ever when they recover! W. M. T.

## Section 88.

### EIGHTH AND NINTH PLAGUES, AND WARNING OF TENTH.

EXODUS 10 : 1–29 ; 11 : 1–10.

10 : 1 AND the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh : for I have hardened his heart, and
2 the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs in the midst of them : and that
thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought
upon Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them ; that ye may know that I am
3 the LORD. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith
the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before
4 me? let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go,
5 behold, to-morrow will I bring locusts into thy border : and they shall cover the face of
the earth, that one shall not be able to see the earth : and they shall eat the residue of that
which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which
6 groweth for you out of the field : and thy houses shall be filled, and the houses of all thy
servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians ; as neither thy fathers nor thy fathers'
fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he
7 turned, and went out from Pharaoh And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long
shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their
8 God : knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? And Moses and Aaron were brought
again unto Pharaoh : and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God : but who are
9 they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with
our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go ; for we
10 must hold a feast unto the LORD. And he said unto them, So be the LORD with you, as I
11 will let you go, and your little ones : look to it ; for evil is before you. Not so : go now
ye that are men, and serve the LORD ; for that is what ye desire. And they were driven
out from Pharaoh's presence.
12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the
locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land,

13 even all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt,
and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all the night; and
14 when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over
all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the borders of Egypt; very grievous were they;
15 before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. For
they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat
every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there
remained not any green thing, either tree or herb of the field, through all the land of
16 Egypt. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned
17 against the LORD your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin
only this once, and intreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death
18 only. And he went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD. And the LORD turned
19 an exceeding strong west wind, which took up the locusts, and drove them into the Red
20 Sea; there remained not one locust in all the border of Egypt. But the LORD hardened
Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may
22 be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses
stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of
23 Egypt three days; they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three
24 days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. And Pharaoh called unto
Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed:
25 let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must also give into our hand
26 sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God. Our cattle
also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take
to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we
27 come thither. But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.
28 And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more;
29 for in the day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well;
I will see thy face again no more.

11 : 1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet one plague more will I bring upon Pharaoh, and
upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely
2 thrust you out hence altogether. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let them ask
every man of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels
3 of gold. And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover
the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and
in the sight of the people.

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of
5 Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh
that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the
6 mill; and all the firstborn of cattle. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land
7 of Egypt, such as there hath been none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against
any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that
ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.
8 And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me,
saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out.
And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh will not hearken unto you: that my wonders
10 may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders
before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children
of Israel go out of his land.

### THE EIGHTH PLAGUE (10 : 1–20).

*Locusts covering the Earth and filling the Houses.*

Every judgment and every deliverance from it would have led an ingenuous mind to see the wrath of God for disobedience, and his clemency upon promise of amendment. But this heart was so proud and audacious as to contend with the Almighty; it was exasperated with severity, and conceived vain hopes upon the removal of a judgment, that the hand of God was tired and would yield to the obstinacy

of man. With respect to this perverse temper, it was that God says, I have hardened Pharaoh's heart; meaning, by his dealings with him, which were intended to correct and amend him, but by his misapplication of them, they still left him more incorrigible, and finally ended in his utter destruction. *Reading.*

Alas for man's perverse and false nature—his proud heart and his lying lips! How readily he relapses back into his old and much-loved sin and becomes more hardened than ever! The judgments of God extort confessions and tears and prayers; but God's mercies let off this pressure and leave the guilty soul to fly back to its old sins again. So it was with Pharaoh. God's mercies, abused, worked out his ruin. But it were simply monstrous to say that this showing of mercy is on God's part a moral wrong and that it throws over upon him the moral responsibility of hardening the sinner's heart Yet it was precisely in this way—perhaps more really and potently than in any other—that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh. H. C.——Who can deny that what God did on Pharaoh was much more proper to *soften* than to *harden* his heart; especially when it is observable, that it was not till after seeing each miracle, and after the ceasing of each plague, that his heart is said to have been hardened? *Psalmanezer.*

**2. That thou mayest tell.** We have here for the first time the far-reaching purpose announced, of the transmission by report of these Jehovah's wonderful dealings from generation to generation in Israel. As a sample of this transmission see Ps. 78 and 105. *Alf.*——The events of this wonderful conflict and victory were stamped into the national life of Israel; they reappear all along the course of future ages, interwoven into the very warp and woof of her national history and into the moral forces which developed the nation's piety. It might as reasonably be maintained that there never was any Hebrew nation as that God did not bring them forth out of Egypt with a high hand, first loosing Pharaoh's grasp by these ten plagues, and last, burying his pursuing hosts in the waters of the Red Sea. H. C.——**And ye shall know that I am the Lord.** The grand scope of all these signs was to reveal the Creator in his true character to man. This is the lesson of nature, of providence, and of grace, to those who read and understand. **3. How long dost thou refuse to humble thyself before me?** Eight signs, one of them instructive and seven corrective, had already been given to him. His haughtiness of spirit is not subdued; to humble himself even before God he has not yet learned. M.

**7.** I am not surprised that Pharaoh's servants remonstrated against his folly and madness when they heard the plague of locusts announced. Let the men go, said they to their proud master, that they may serve the Lord their God. Knowest thou not yet *that Egypt is destroyed?* And when they came they were *very grievous*, for they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened, and they ate every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, and there remained not any green thing in the trees, nor in the herbs of the field. Moses declared that they should cover the face of the earth so that one cannot be able to see the ground. I have this dreadful picture indelibly fixed on my mind. For several nights after they came to Abeih, as soon as I closed my eyes the whole earth seemed to be creeping and jumping, nor could I banish the ugly image from my brain. The coming of locusts is a sore judgment from God. If I command the locusts to devour the land, says the Lord to Solomon. Yes, it is the command of God that brings these insects to scourge a land for the wickedness of the inhabitants thereof. *W. M. Thompson.*

**8, 9. But who are they that shall go?** Hebrew, *Who and who (are) going?* The repetition of the interrogative is emphatic. He was to specify with the utmost distinctness who were to go, and who were to stay behind. Moses in reply tells him plainly that they were to serve God with their *all;* that their wives and their children, their flocks and their herds, without exception or reservation, must go with them.

**10.** The bold and positive declaration of Moses was too much for Pharaoh. Greatly exasperated by this uncompromising statement he answers in a style of mingled irony and wrath, "Let the Lord do with you as I will let you go;" *q. d.* "If this be the proposed condition of your going, that you take your little ones with you, then may the God whom you serve favor you as much with his presence as I do with my consent, and no more. In this case your prospects are sorry indeed." It is a very strong and emphatic mode of denying them the permission which they sought. *Bush.*

**14, 15.** By the hail and thunder and fire mingled with rain, both the barley and flax were ruined, and their pastures must have been greatly injured. But the wheat and the rye were not yet in ear: and such was the fruitfulness of the soil, that a very short time would have sufficed for the leaves of the trees, and for

the grass of the field to have been recruited. It pleased God, therefore, to send an host of locusts, to devour every leaf and blade of grass which had been left in the former devastation, and whatever was beginning to vegetate. It is hard to conceive how widely the mischief extends, when a cloud of these insects comes upon a country. Though it were a paradise before, it is soon rendered a desert. They devour to the very root and bark ; so that it is a long time before vegetation can be renewed. Scarcely any misfortune can so effectually damage a land, but that room will be left for them to add to the mischief. How dreadful their inroads at all times were, may be known from a variety of authors, ancient and modern. They describe them as being brought on upon a country by one wind, and carried off by another ; and speak of their numbers as past all conception. As Egypt is, in great measure, bounded to the east and north by seas, and is far removed from those regions in Africa where locusts particularly generate, it is not much infested with them. However, at the time spoken of, an east wind prevailed "all day and all night ;" and the whole country in the morning swarmed with these insects. Hence we know that they came from Arabia. *Bryant.*——Generally, it is not the east but the south wind that brings the locusts, from Ethiopia or Libya. It was purposely from a long distance that they were sent, to show that Jehovah reigned everywhere. A. E.

**17.** So formidable was the calamity, that although Pharaoh had previously driven Moses and Aaron from his presence, yet he is now constrained to send for them again, to avow his fault, and to beg for one reprieve more. His confession now has more the air of unfeigned repentance than on any former occasion. He acknowledges that he had sinned against God and his servants, humbly asks their forgiveness, and sues for their intercession. So there are but too many who in the hour of sickness and in the fear of death, have prayed to be delivered *only this once*, with promises of amendment, but who yet upon recovery have returned, Pharaoh-like, to their former impenitence, worldliness, and sin. They forget that these repeated lapses and broken vows are all the while swelling guilt to fearful dimensions, and making more and more ripe for a sudden destruction. *Bush.*

The conviction was forced upon Pharaoh and the confession extorted from his lips (utterly against his will), that God's hand wrought these achievements ; that these calamities came at his command, and could be removed by his power and not otherwise. Hence over and over he begs Moses to pray to his God for their removal. See this in the case of the frogs (8 : 8) ; of the flies (8 : 28, 29) ; of the hail (9 : 27–29) ; and the locusts. It is not easy to see how stronger testimony to the reality of miracles can ever exist. That these plagues were real miracles, direct from the hand of God, it is unquestionably the intent of the whole narrative to set forth and affirm. So much, no candid reader of the account has ever questioned. Some may say, the narrator was himself deceived : none will deny that he saw God's finger there and meant to make all his readers see it. None can deny that according to his account even proud Pharaoh saw and felt the very finger of God in them. In fact the narrative makes this its *main purpose*, viz. to show that these judgments were nothing less than immediate visitations from the hand of the Almighty. Take out this element and there is nothing left. H. C.

**19. There remained not one locust.** The sudden and complete disappearance of the locusts is a phenomenon scarcely less remarkable than their coming ; the putrefaction of such immense masses not unfrequently causes a terrible pestilence near the coasts of the sea into which they fall. *Cook.*

### The Ninth Plague (10 : 21).

*Three Days' Thick Darkness.*

**22, 23.** No sooner had Pharaoh's request been granted, than his rebellion returned. Then, once more unannounced, came the *ninth stroke*, more terrible than any that had preceded. A thick darkness covered the whole land, except Goshen There was this peculiar phenomenon about it, that, not only were the people unable to see each other, but "neither rose any from his place for three days." A. E. ——Their great divinity, the Sun, was put to shame before the God of the slave and the stranger. For three whole days, as Moses stretched his hand toward heaven, a darkness, described with unexampled force as a DARKNESS THAT MIGHT BE FELT, overspread the land ; not merely was the sun unable to penetrate the gloom, and enlighten his favored land, but they could distinguish nothing, and were constrained to sit in awe-struck inactivity. *Milman.*——So deep was the darkness that during the whole of this time, "they saw not one another." So overwhelming were the amazement and sorrow, that during this period no man "rose from his place." Uncertain whether they should ever again see the light, they lay paralyzed in a dark-

ness that could be felt. Here the triumph of the God of Israel was complete, and the perfect vanity of Egyptian idolatry demonstrated. Egypt, with all her learning and prowess, supported by a gorgeous and almost boundless range of idolatrous religion, is exhibited as convicted, punished, and without any power to escape, or any hope of alleviation. *Smith's Heb. People.*——What madness could be greater than theirs, when in their hardness of heart they cease not to contend against God's hand, formidable as it was? Their waters turned into blood had denied them drink; frogs and other animals had filled the whole country; their limbs had been enfevered by boils; the hail had destroyed part of their corn; the locusts had brought still increased destruction; the very hosts of heaven were armed against them. *Calv.*

But in Goshen all these three days was light and festive joy. For while thick darkness lay upon Egypt, the children of Israel, as directed by God, had already on the tenth of the month —four days before the great night of woe—selected their Paschal lambs, and were in waiting for their deliverance. And alike the darkness and the light were of Jehovah—the one symbolical of his judgments, the other of his favor. A. E.——During these three days of darkness to the Egyptians, if God had so pleased, the Israelites by the light which they had might have made their escape, and without asking leave of Pharaoh; but God would bring them out *with a high hand*, and not by stealth or in haste (Is. 52 : 12). H.

**24–28.** Once more, Pharaoh now summoned Moses. This time he would let all the people go, if only they would leave their flocks behind as pledge of their return. And when Moses refused the condition, the king "said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself; see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die." It was a challenge which sounded not strange in Moses' ears, for before this interview God had informed him what would happen, and directed that Israel should prepare to leave. A. E.——Pharaoh quails before the appalling darkness. He yields another point. The women and children may go with the men, but not the flocks and the herds. Moses, however, cannot go to hold a national festival unto the Lord without sacrifices. Not a hoof of their cattle must be left behind. Pharaoh is again exasperated. His proud heart becomes hard as the nether millstone. A reckless madness takes possession of him. He forbids Moses to appear before him again on pain of death. There is something ominous in the reply of Moses. "Well hast thou spoken; I will see thy face no more." He means, as we shall see, more than is here expressed. M.

Now Pharaoh proves like to some beasts that grow mad with baiting: grace often resisted turns to desperateness: "Get thee from me; look thou see my face no more; whensoever thou comest in my sight, thou shalt die." As if Moses could not plague him as well in absence: as if he, that could not take away the lice, flies, frogs, grasshoppers, could at his pleasure take away the life of Moses, that procured them. What is this, but to run upon the judgments, and run away from the remedies? Evermore, when God's messengers are abandoned, destruction is near. Moses will see him no more, but God will now visit him more than ever. The fearfulest plagues God still reserves for the upshot: all the former do but make way for the last. Pharaoh may exclude Moses and Aaron, but God's angel he cannot exclude: invisible messengers are used, when the visible are debarred. *Bp. H.*

**29. Spoken well.** The ungodly king, carried away by his rage, prophesies against his will. God repays on Pharaoh's own head what he had threatened Moses. But we must remember that Moses did not speak on his own impulse, but at God's command. Had he not been informed that this was the last communication, he would still have been ready to do his part. *Calv.*——**No more.** It is not said that Moses went out. His departure took place ch. 11 : 8; therefore that which follows, though it happened somewhat earlier, is placed after this to explain the speech of Moses. *Gerl.*

**11 : 1–3.** The first three verses of Ex. 11 must have been spoken to Moses *before* his last interview with Pharaoh. Verse 1 should be rendered: "And Jehovah had said unto Moses," etc. They are inserted after 10 : 29, because they account for and explain the confident reply with which Moses met the challenge of Pharaoh. Evidently, 11 : 4, and what follows, form part of that reply of Moses to Pharaoh which begins in 10 : 29. A. E.——**1. The Lord said.** Or "the Lord *had* said." Commentators generally agree that the first three verses of this chapter are parenthetical The most probable account of their insertion in this place appears to be that, before Moses relates the last warning given to Pharaoh, he feels it right to recall to his readers' minds the revelation and command which had been previously given to him by the Lord. *Cook.*

**2. Ask.** Neither here, nor in ch. 3 : 22, ch.

12 : 35, is it said that the Israelites had "*borrowed*" the vessels ; nor ch. 12 : 36, that the Egyptians had "*lent*" them ; but the former had *demanded*, the latter had *yielded* to the demand : when the transaction took place, the journey out was determined on, and even desired by the Egyptians, and there was no thought on either side of "giving back." Moreover, this "spoiling" has not the signification of secretly taking away,—but that of openly taking possession of anything. The significance of the Divine command, and of the conduct of the Israelites, is rather this : Egypt and Pharaoh had sinned in manifold ways, by robbery and tyranny against Israel—they deny the people independence, and liberty to worship their God : their God takes the part of his firstborn son, and smites, after many other signs, the firstborn in the whole of Egypt. The heathen king and people are humbled, and lose courage ; they entreat Israel to be gone, and drive them forth ; and the Egyptians give them all they can in order to appease them. Thus it comes to pass, that without violation of right, the powerless, oppressed, poor people spoil their tyrants, and depart laden with their treasures. *Gerl.*

**3. The people favor. Moses was great.** This favor shown to the Israelites and this deep reverence for Moses are noted as conjoint effects of the previous judgments. The mention of this second result, as well as the former, is essential to the moral completeness of the narrative. It is a strange mistake to suppose that the words contain a "laudation of Moses." *Birks.*——With historical faithfulness and unaffected simplicity Moses makes these remarks about his own person ; they are historical facts ; and he relates them with the same objective impartiality with which Xenophon speaks of himself in the Anabasis, or Cæsar in his Commentaries. *Kalisch.*

THREATENING OF THE TENTH PLAGUE (11 : 4-8).

**4. And Moses said.** The following words must be read in immediate connection with the last verse of the preceding chapter. It is not there stated that Moses left the presence of Pharaoh ; this passage tells us what took place after his declaration that this would be his last interview. **About midnight.** This marks the hour, but not the day, on which the visitation would take place. There may have been, and probably was, an interval of some days, during which preparations might be made both for the celebration of the Passover, and the departure of the Israelites : in the mean time Egypt remained under the shadow of the menace.

**5. The firstborn.** Two points are to be noticed : 1. The extent of the visitation : the whole land suffers in the persons of its firstborn, not merely for the guilt of the sovereign, but for the actual participation of the people in the crime of infanticide. 2. The limitation. Pharaoh's command had been to slay all the male children of the Israelites, one child only in each Egyptian family was to die. *Cook.*

Now is threatened the greatest and most awful of the plagues. The first came out of the river, the benefactor of the land ; the third and fourth from the earth ; the rest from the air. All stood in close connection to the idolatrous land, whose Lord the God of Israel would show himself to be. But now he will smite them with another plague, not only far exceeding all the rest, but also coming so directly from God's hand, that none of the natural phenomena peculiar to Egypt could offer any resemblance to it. *Gerl.*——This had been the first threatened (ch. 4 : 23, *I will slay thy son, thy firstborn*), but is last to be executed ; lesser judgments were tried, which, if they had done the work, would have prevented this. See how slow God is to wrath ; and how willing to be met with in the way of his judgments, and to have his anger turned away, and particularly how precious the lives of men are in his eyes : if the death of their cattle would have humbled and reformed them, their children had been spared ; but if men will not improve the gradual advances of divine judgments, they must thank themselves, if they find, in the issue, that the worst was reserved for the last. H.

**8. After that I will go out.** Moses has thus far recited the words of God's message to Pharaoh, but here he begins to speak in his own person, announcing the speedy submission of Pharaoh's servants to *him*, and their humble and earnest request that he should "depart out of their coasts." We must bear in mind that Moses says this in his *representative* character, and that it is *to the Most High in Moses* that this submission was to be made. It is indeed wonderful to see God thus identifying himself with a creature who speaks in his name, and yet it is unquestionable that the Scriptures afford repeated instances of the same usage of speech. *Bush.*

**In hot anger.** It is the Holy Spirit which here inflames the heart of Moses with holy zeal, and preserves it from all mixture of unholy passion. Much reason have we, when moved by righteous indignation, to pray for the spirit of

forbearance and singleness of mind to preserve us from excess. Yet we see from Moses' anger, that God does not desire that we should be cold and indifferent in the execution of his commands. *Calv.*

**9, 10.** These two verses are a recapitulation of all that has been related after the introductory paragraph in the seventh chapter, especially ver. 3. This verse is the prediction ; the intervening narrative sets forth the details, and the two verses now before us are the logical conclusion or summing up of the whole. This inferential summary could not come in before the speech of Moses, threatening the death of the firstborn, as this occurs at the closing interview between him and Pharaoh, and presents the latter with the last occasion for rejecting the demands of the Lord. And it could not come in after the death of the firstborn, because then Pharaoh at length yielded, whereas these verses record his long-continued resistance. They form therefore the methodical recapitulation of the opposition of Pharaoh foretold by the Lord, when that opposition has come to its last efforts. "Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Mizraim," for the perpetual instruction of mankind in certain sublime and necessary principles of theological truth. And so it has accordingly happened. M.——It is impossible to read the conclusion of this chapter without being reminded of the very similar ending of the chapter in John (12) which precedes the narrative of the great Passover itself : v. 37, "*Although he had done all these miracles before them, yet believed they not on him,*"—in words almost the reproduction of those used here. *Alf.*

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Look at that world-ideal of the irresponsible tyrant. No fancy ever made him ; no human imagination could have kept up a consistency, so well sustained, of character and destiny. Leave out, if you please, all that is miraculous in the plagues, or resolve them into strictly physical events coming at longer seeming intervals, and having a miraculous air by being crowded upon a brief historical canvas. There stand the figures of the king and the prophet ; we have before us that truest of despots, that grandest of seers. Pharaoh and Moses,—we image them, at once, as forms of living men ; they have more life for us than Solon and Crœsus, than Socrates and the Athenian judges, than Seneca and Nero, than any characters that were ever drawn by the genius of Homer, or sketched by the graphic pen of Tacitus. The scenes are so vivid, though so far away ; so life-like, though of such high proportion ; so natural, though so grand, that we can hardly conceive their falsehood. What convergency of scattered myths could have grown into such a consistent whole? What single mind could ever have created a picture so defiant of the antiquating power of time? It has the same life for us now, in this remote Western world, that it had more than three thousand years ago on the banks of the Nile. There it stands right before us, as though written yesterday, clear as the pyramids, fresh as the sculptures on the Karnak, and with a meaning for the world how far beyond any wisdom we may ever hope to get from folios of monumental learning. It is, in fact, a painting that never can grow old ; for it is engraved, photographed, we might say, in our human nature ; age only adds to the brightness of its coloring ; the most minute inspection, under the highest lens of antiquarian learning, only reveals its perfect accuracy of line and shade. T. L.

It is impossible, as we read the description of the Plagues, not to feel how much of force is added to it by a knowledge of the peculiar customs and character of the country in which they occurred. It is not an ordinary river that is turned into blood ; it is the sacred, beneficent, solitary Nile, the very life of the state and of the people, in its streams and canals and tanks, and vessels of wood and vessels of stone, then, as now, used for the filtration of the delicious water from the sediment of the river-bed. It is not an ordinary nation that is struck by the mass of putrefying vermin lying in heaps by the houses, the villages, and the fields, or multiplying out of the dust of the desert sands on each side of the Nile valley. It is the cleanliest of all the ancient nations, clothed in white linen, anticipating, in their fastidious delicacy and ceremonial purity, the habits of modern and northern Europe. It is not the ordinary cattle that died in the field, or ordinary fish that died in the river, or ordinary reptiles that were overcome by the rod of Aaron. It is the sacred goat of Mendes, the ram of Ammon, the calf of Heliopolis, the bull Apis, the crocodile of Ombos, the carp of Latopolis. It is not an ordinary land of which the flax and the barley, and every green thing in the trees, and every herb of the field are smitten by the two great calamities of storm and locust. It is the garden of the ancient Eastern world,—the long line of green meadow and cornfield, and groves of palm and sycamore and fig-tree, from the Cataracts to the Delta, doubly refreshing from the desert which it intersects, doubly marvellous from the

river whence it springs. If these things were calamities anywhere, they were truly "signs and wonders"—speaking signs and oracular wonders—in such a land as "the land of Ham." A. P. S.

This was the season of the greatest and most stupendous miracles of any recorded in the history of the world, whether we look to the period of its duration, or to the magnitude of the scale on which the miracles were wrought. The public ministry and miracles of Moses lasted a great deal longer than those of Jesus Christ. And, generally speaking, Moses' miracles were of wider and larger operation, and bearing in the greater number of instances the same relation to the other miracles, whether of the Old or the New Testament, that nations do to individuals. T. C.

*The Plagues are divided* first into nine, and one, the last one, standing clearly apart from all the others, in the awful shriek of woe which it draws forth from every Egyptian home. The nine are arranged in threes. In the first of each three the warning is given to Pharaoh in the morning (7 : 15 ; 8 · 20 ; 9 : 13). In the first and second of each three, the plague is announced beforehand (8 : 1 ; 9 : 1 ; 10 : 1), in the third not (8 : 16 ; 9 : 8 ; 10 : 21). At the third the magicians of Pharaoh acknowledged the finger of God (8 : 19), at the sixth they cannot stand before Moses (9 : 11), and at the ninth Pharaoh refuses to see the face of Moses any more (10 : 28). In the first three Aaron uses the rod ; in the second three it is not mentioned ; in the third three Moses uses it, though in the last of them only his hand is mentioned. All these marks of order lie on the face of the narrative, and point to a deeper order of nature and reason out of which they spring.

The gradation in the severity of these strokes is no less obvious. In the first three no distinction is made among the inhabitants of the land ; in the remaining seven a distinction is made between the Israelites, who are shielded from, and the Egyptians, who are exposed to, the stroke. In these seven which are peculiar to the Egyptians, the order is the reverse of that in the work of creation. Three refer to the animal creation, and three to the vegetable world, the support of animal life. The last of these six is darkness, the opposite of light, the product of the first day ; and the seventh is death. The first three affect the health and comfort of man ; the next three take away the staff of life ; then comes death itself, and the work of destruction is complete. M.

*The whole period covered by the Plagues* was about ten months. The delay occasioned by Pharaoh's repeated refusals to listen to the commands afforded ample time for preparation on the part of the Israelites. Two full months elapsed between the first and second interview of Moses with the king. During that time the people, uprooted for the first time from the district in which they had been settled for centuries, were dispersed throughout Egypt, subjected to severe suffering, and impelled to exertions of a kind differing altogether from their ordinary habits, whether as herdsmen or bondsmen. This was the first and a most important step in their training for a migratory life in the desert.

Toward the end of June, at the beginning of the rise of the annual inundation, the first series of plagues began. The Nile was stricken. Egypt was visited in the centre both of its physical existence and of its national superstitions. Pharaoh did not give way, and no intimation as yet was made to the people that permission for their departure would be extorted ; but the intervention of their Lord was now certain, the people on their return wearied and exhausted from the search for stubble, had an interval of suspense. Three months appear to have intervened between this and the next plague. There must have been a movement among all the families of Israel ; as they recapitulated their wrongs and hardships, the sufferings of their officers, and their own position of hopeless antagonism to their oppressors, it is impossible that they should not have looked about them, calculated their numbers and resources, and meditated upon the measures which, under the guidance of a leader of ability and experience, might enable them to effect their escape from Egypt. Five months might not be too much, but were certainly sufficient, to bring the people so far into a state of preparation for departure.

The plague of frogs coincided in time with the greatest extension of the inundation in September. Pharaoh then gave the first indication of yielding ; the permission extorted from him, though soon recalled, was not therefore ineffectual. Moses was not likely to lose any time in transmitting instructions to the people. The first steps may have been then taken toward an orderly marshalling of the people.

The third plague must have followed soon after that of the frogs, early in October. It marks the close of the first series of inflictions, none of them causing great suffering, but quite sufficient on the one hand to make the Egyptians conscious of danger, and to confirm in the Israelites a hope of no remote deliverance.

The second series of plagues was far more severe ; it began with swarms of poisonous insects, probably immediately after the subsidence of the inundation. It is a season of great importance to Egypt ; from that season to the following June the land is uncovered ; cultiva tion begins ; a great festival (called Chabsta) marks the period for ploughing. At that time there was the first separation between Goshen and the rest of Egypt. The impression upon Pharaoh was far deeper than before, and then, in November, the people once more received instructions for departure ; there was occasion for a rehearsal, so to speak, of the measures requisite for the proper organization of the tribes and families of Israel.

The cattle plague broke out in December, or at the latest in January. It was thoroughly Egyptian both in season and in character. The exemption of the Israelites was probably attributed by Pharaoh to natural causes : but the care then bestowed by the Israelites upon their cattle, the separation from all sources of contagion, must have materially advanced their preparation for departure

Then came the plague of boils, severe but ineffectual, serving however to make the Egyptians understand that continuance in opposition would be visited on their persons. With this plague the second series ended. It appears to have lasted about three months.

The hailstorms followed, just when they now occur in Egypt, from the middle of February to the early weeks of March. The time was now drawing near. The Egyptians for the first time show that they are seriously impressed. There was a division among them, many feared the word of the Lord, and took the precautions, which, also for the first time, Moses then indicated. This plague drew from Pharaoh the first confession of guilt ; and now for the third time, between one and two months before the Exodus, the Israelites receive permission to depart, when formal instructions for preparation were of course given by Moses. The people now felt also for the first time that they might look for support or sympathy among the very servants of Pharaoh.

The plague of locusts, when the leaves were green, toward the middle of March, was preceded by another warning, the last but one. The conquest over the spirit of Egypt was now complete. All but the king gave way (see 10 : 7) Though not so common in Egypt as in adjoining countries, the plague occurs there at intervals, and is peculiarly dreaded. Pharaoh once more gives permission to depart ; once more the people are put in an attitude of expectation.

The ninth plague concludes the third series. Like the third and the sixth, each closing a series, it was preceded by no warning. It was peculiarly Egyptian. Though causing comparatively but little suffering, it was felt most deeply as a menace and precursor of destruction. It took place most probably a very few days before the last and crowning plague, a plague distinct in character from all others, the first and the only one which brought death home to the Egyptians, and accomplished the deliverance of Israel.

We have thus throughout the characteristics of local coloring, of adaptation to the circumstances of the Israelites, and of repeated announcements followed by repeated postponements, which enabled and indeed compelled the Israelites to complete that organization of their nation, without which their departure might have been, as it has been often represented, a mere disorderly flight. *Cook.*

## Section 89.

### THE FIRST PASSOVER. TENTH PLAGUE : DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN.

EXODUS 12 : 1–14, 21–36.

1 AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall
2 be unto you the beginning of months : it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak
3 ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth *day* of this month they shall take
4 to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for an household : and
if the household be too little for a lamb then shall he and his neighbour next unto his house
take one according to the number of the souls ; according to every man's eating ye shall make

your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year : ye
shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats : and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth
day of the same month : and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at
even. And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two side posts and on the lintel,
upon the houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast
with fire, and unleavened bread ; with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor
sodden at all with water, but roast with fire ; its head with its legs and with the inwards
thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning ; but that which remaineth
of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it ; with your loins
girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand : and ye shall eat it in haste : it
is the LORD's passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite
all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ; and against all the gods of Egypt
I will execute judgments : I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon
the houses where ye are : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no
plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be
unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD : throughout your genera-
tions we shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you
lambs according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop,
and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with
the blood that is in the bason ; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until
the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians ; and when he seeth
the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and
will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe
this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when
ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye
shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you,
What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover,
who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians,
and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the chil-
dren of Israel went and did so ; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

And it came to pass at midnight, that the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,
from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was
in the dungeon ; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and
all his servants, and all the Egyptians ; and there was a great cry in Egypt ; for there was not
a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and
said, Rise up, get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel ; and
go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. Take both your flocks and your herds, as ye have said,
and be gone ; and bless me also. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, to send
them out of the land in haste ; for they said, We be all dead men. And the people took their
dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon
their shoulders. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses ; and they
asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment : and the LORD gave
the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked.
And they spoiled the Egyptians.

A nobler spectacle of a people's faith can scarcely be conceived than when, on receiving these ordinances, "the people bowed the head and worshipped" (v. 27). Any attempt at description either of Israel's attitude or of the scenes witnessed when the Lord, passing through the land "about midnight," smote each firstborn from the only son of Pharaoh to the child of the maidservant and the captive, and even the firstborn of beasts, would only weaken the impression of the majestic silence of Scripture. In that midnight hour did Jehovah execute "judgment against all the gods of Egypt," showing, as Calvin remarks, how vain and false had been the worship of those who were now so powerless to help. That was also the night of Israel's birth as a nation : of their creation and adoption as the people of God. **2.** Hence the very order of the year was now changed. The month of the Passover (*Abib*) became henceforth the first of the year. The later Jews had a twofold computation of

the year—the *ecclesiastical year*, which began with the month *Abib*, or Nisan, and by which all the festivals were arranged; and the *civil year*, which began in autumn, in the seventh month of the sacred year. A. E ——Moses appointed that Nisan should be the first month; so that this month began the year, *as to all the solemnities they observed in honor of God*, although they preserved the original order of the months as to buying and selling, and other ordinary affairs. *Josephus.*

*Months of the* Ecclesiastical *and* Civil *years compared with our months.*

| Ecclesiastical Year. | Civil Year. |
|---|---|
| 1. Nisan or Abib, | 7. part of March and April. |
| 2. Jyar or Zif, | 8. " April and May. |
| 3. Sivan, | 9. " May and June. |
| 9. Kisleu (Chisleu), | 10. " June and July. |
| 10. Thebet, | 11. " July and August. |
| 11. Sebat, | 12. " Aug. and Sept. |
| 12. Adar, | 1. " Sept. and Oct. |
| 4. Thammuz, | 2. " Oct. and Nov. |
| 5. Ab, | 3. " Nov. and Dec. |
| 6 Elul, | 4. " Dec. and Jan. |
| 7. Tizri, | 5. " Jan. and Feb. |
| 8. Marchesvan, | 6. " Feb. and March. |

As the Jewish years were lunar years, and therefore consisted of only 354 days and 8 hours, they were accommodated to solar years by the addition of a month at the end of the Ecclesiastical year, and this intercalary month, which came after the month Adar, was called Ke-Adar, or the Second Adar. H. C.

Still there remains among the Jews a twofold manner of dating and counting their years. In all matters which relate to the common business of life they retain the old and natural computation, beginning with Tizri or September, so that the first month is the beginning of Autumn; but in religious matters and festivals they follow the injunctions of Moses and begin with Nisan; and this is the legal year, beginning nearly with our month of March, yet not precisely, because we have not their ancient *embolisms;* for, since twelve circuits of the moon would not equal the sun's course, they were obliged to make an intercalation. Thence it happens that the month *Nisan*, in which they celebrated the Passover, begins among the Jews sometimes earlier and sometimes later, according as the intercalation retards it. *Calv.*

Instructions to Moses respecting the Passover (vs. 3-14).

**3-7.** The sacrifice was chosen by each household *four* days before the "Passover" actually took place—most probably in remembrance of the prediction to Abraham, that "in the fourth generation" the children of Israel should come again to the land of Canaan. The sacrifice might be a lamb or a kid of goats, but it must be "without blemish, a male of the first year." Each lamb or kid should be just sufficient for the sacrificial meal of a company, so that if a family were too small, it should join with another. The sacrifice was offered "between the evenings" by each head of the company, the blood caught in a basin, and some of it "struck" "on the two side-posts and the upper door-post of the houses" by means of "a branch of hyssop" (v. 22). A. E.

**5. Your lamb shall be without blemish.** All the types of the grandest ordinance of the Mosaical dispensation, the feast of the Passover, were accomplished in that day when "Christ our passover was sacrificed for us." By no undesigned coincidence the two events were made even in time to concur; and the Jews celebrated the passover and consummated all its types, by bringing to his death *on the same day*, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The victim was to be a lamb, the most gentle and innocent of all God's creatures; and therefore the most fitting emblem of "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." It was to be a lamb of the first year, without blemish. If it bore the mark of the slightest deformity, or even deficiency, it would have been a forbidden sacrifice, and a victim unfit to represent him of whom it is said, "we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." *Kit.*

**6. Keep it until the fourteenth day.** The lamb or kid was to be taken from the flock on the *tenth* day, and kept up and fed by itself till the *fourteenth* day, when it was to be sacrificed. This was never commanded nor practised afterward. The Rabbins mark *four* things that were required in the first passover, that were never required afterward: 1. The eating of the lamb in their houses dispersed through Goshen. 2. The taking the lamb on the tenth day. 3. The striking of its blood on the door-posts and lintels of their houses. And 4 Their eating it in haste. These things were not required of the succeeding generations. A. C.——**At even.** The sacrificial lamb was to be offered "between the evenings" (marginal rendering), that is, according to Jewish tradition, from the time the sun begins to decline to that of its full setting, say, between 3 and 6 o'clock P.M. A. E.

**7. Take of the blood, and strike it on the two side-posts.** This was to be done by dipping a bunch of hyssop into the blood, and thus sprinkling it upon the posts, etc. (see ver. 22). That this sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb was an emblem of the sacrifice and atonement made by the death of Jesus Christ, is most clearly intimated in the Sacred Writings (1 Pet. 1 : 2 ; Heb. 9 : 13, 14 ; 8 : 10). It is remarkable that no blood was to be sprinkled on the *threshold*, to teach a reverent regard for the blood of Christ, that men should not *tread under foot the Son of GOD*, nor *count the blood of the covenant* wherewith they were sanctified, *an unholy thing* (Heb. 10 : 29). A. C.

The regular practice under the law was to sprinkle the altar with the blood of the offering (Lev. 1 : 5 ; 4 : 5). But in Egypt, where there was no tabernacle and no altar, each house was the place of offering, and was treated as an altar. Of houses as well as of cities, the door, or gate, was the representative part (see ch. 20 : 10 ; Deut. 5 : 14). The door consisted of lintel, posts, and threshold. Of these the two former only were to be sprinkled, as the blood on the threshold would be liable to be trodden under foot. The sprinkling was significant of atonement and cleansing from sin, for it was to be performed (ver. 22) with hyssop, invariably used in the law when cleansing from sin was symbolized (Lev. 14 : 49 ; Num. 19 : 18). *Alf.*

It was not enough that the blood of the lamb was shed, but it must be *sprinkled;* denoting the application of the merits of Christ's death to our souls ; we must *receive the atonement* (Rom. 5 : 11). It was to be sprinkled with *a bunch of hyssop* (v. 22), *dipped in the basin.* The everlasting covenant, like the basin, is the conservatory of this blood, the benefits and privileges purchased by it are laid up for us there ; faith is the bunch of hyssop by which we apply the promises to ourselves, and the benefits of the blood of Christ laid up in them. The blood of sprinkling is the saints' security, in times of common calamity ; that is it that marks them for God, pacifies conscience, and gives them boldness of access to the throne of grace, and so becomes a wall of protection round them, and a wall of partition between them and the children of this world. H. —— The sprinkling of blood was a representation of the offering of the life, substituted for that of the firstborn in each house, as an expiatory and vicarious sacrifice.

**8. In that night.** The night is thus clearly distinguished from the evening when the lamb was slain. It was slain before sunset on the 14th, and eaten after sunset, the beginning of the 15th. *Cook.*——**Roast with fire.** Because it could sooner be made ready by roasting than by boiling. This circumstance constituted a marked difference between the Passover-lamb and all the other peace-offerings, the flesh of which was usually boiled, in order to be eaten both by the people and the priests, as something additional even at the paschal solemnity. Wherefore in 2 Chron. 35 : 13, the two kinds of offerings are accurately distinguished : "And they roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance : but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans." *Bush.*

**Eat the flesh.** The paschal lamb was killed, not to be looked upon only, but to be fed upon ; so we must by faith make Christ ours, as we do that which we eat, and we must receive spiritual strength and nourishment from him, as from our food, and have delight and satisfaction in him, as we have in eating and drinking, when we are hungry or thirsty (see John 6 : 53-55). H.

**Unleavened bread.** Leaven, as the cause of fermentation, solution, corruption, was regarded as an emblem of impurity ; and therefore unleavened bread, as a type of what God's redeemed people ought to be, was to be eaten seven days. To be cut off from the people was the penalty of eating leavened bread. The whole feast had thus the name of the feast of unleavened bread ; and all leaven was with the most scrupulous care removed from their houses during the days of the feast. *Gerl.*

**9.** This entire consumption of the lamb constitutes one marked difference between the Passover and all other sacrifices, in which either a part or the whole was burned, and thus offered directly to God. The whole substance of the sacrificed lamb was to enter into the substance of the people, the blood only excepted, which was sprinkled as a propitiatory and sacrificial offering. Another point of subordinate importance is noticed. The lamb was slain and the blood sprinkled by the head of each family : no separate priesthood as yet existed in Israel ; its functions belonged from the beginning to the father of the family.

**11. With your loins girded.** These instructions are understood by the Jews to apply only to the first Passover, when they belonged to the occasion. There is no trace of their observance at any later time ; a striking instance of good sense and power of distinguishing between accidents and substantial characteristics. Each of the directions marks prepa-

ration for a journey. *Cook.*——It is obvious that this injunction as to the manner of eating the Passover applied only to the first time of its celebration in Egypt. The loins were to be girded—the long loose robes bound up round the waist ; the sandals on the feet, as was the custom when a long or rough journey was to be undertaken ; the staff in the hand, betokening the same purpose ; and it was to be eaten in haste, literally, in trepidation or anxiety, as the occasion was fearful and urgent. *Alf.*

**The Lord's passover.** A most important statement. It gives at once the great and most significant name to the whole ordinance. *Cook.*——It is a feast of passing over in sparing mercy, instituted by the Lord himself, and to be observed by all his people in obedience to his word. The essential parts of this solemnity are the lamb, the time of sacrificing and eating it, the unleavened bread and bitter herbs, the seven days' feast of unleavened bread. The keeping up from the tenth day was afterward omitted ; the domestic observance by the men, women, and children, was succeeded by the celebration at the place which the Lord had chosen (Deut. 16 : 6) by the men only or chiefly ; the lamb was slain by the house-father or the priest ; the blood was sprinkled, not on the lintel and posts of the house, but apparently on the altar (2 Chron. 30 : 16) ; and the attire and attitude of haste and readiness for travelling were afterward omitted.

Of the three things essential to the salvation of a fallen creature, two are represented by circumcision and the passover, regeneration and redemption. Circumcision denotes the new birth, without indicating any of its fruits. The passover, like all sacrificial feasts, points out not only the act, but the effect of redemption. The slaying of the lamb is the act, being the giving up of the life of one for another : the eating of the sacrifice is the effect, being the reception of the rights and enjoyments recovered on its death. Circumcision was to continue as long as the visible Church was limited to the natural or adopted descendants of Israel : the passover was to be observed until the true Lamb of God should come, of which it was only the type. M.

The primary purpose of this festival was to commemorate Jehovah's "passing over" the houses of the Israelites when he "passed through" the land of Egypt to slay the firstborn in every house. But just as the history of Israel was typical of the whole pilgrimage of man, and as their rescue from Egypt answers to that crisis in the life of God's redeemed people, at which they are ransomed by the blood of the atonement from the penalty of sin, to which they also are subject, so we trace this wider and higher meaning in every feature of the institution. P. S.

**12. I will pass through.** The word rendered "pass through" is wholly distinct from that which means "pass over." The passing through was in judgment, the "passing over" in mercy. **Against all the gods of Egypt.** The meaning of this and of the corresponding passage (Num. 33 : 4) is undoubtedly that the visitation reached the gods of Egypt. The true explanation in this case is that in smiting the firstborn of all living beings, man and beast, God smote the objects of Egyptian worship. It is not merely that the bull and cow and goat and ram and cat were worshipped in the principal cities of Egypt as representatives, or, so to speak, incarnations, of their deities, but that the worship of beasts was universal ; every nome, every town had its sacred animal, including the lowest forms of animal life ; the frog, the beetle, being especial objects of reverence as representing the primeval deities of nature. In fact not a single deity of Egypt was unrepresented by some beast. *Cook.*

**13. See the blood.** A similar mode of expression with that concerning the rainbow Gen. 9 : 16). Although the Lord "knoweth His own," and so far requires no sign, yet still by this strong human mode of expression is the great truth represented that the sign was essential and had a power and meaning in it, and that the atonement which the sacrifice effected was a needful one. The blood, therefore, is by no means merely for a confirmation of the faith of the Israelites. *Gerl.*

**When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague destroy you.** The grand central truth of all the objective truths here is shadowed forth in that blood of the spotless lamb shed and sprinkled on the door-posts. It has a deep, mysterious meaning and finds its interpretation in the history of Calvary and the cross, far onward yet, even fifteen hundred years, in the history. The blood-marked house is but representative of every soul tenement on earth, the dweller in which—made alive to the impending doom by the voice that cries from Sinai, "whosoever sinneth, him will I blot out from my book," and by the voice crying from the depths within—hath fled from under the dark thundercloud of wrath, to him who was lifted up on the cross. This blood is not only the central idea

of this, but of all the revelations of God. The whole gospel is, in fact, summed up just here, when I see the blood I will pass over." Blood ! blood ! this is the one cry of the gospel —the Alpha and the Omega of the gospel. All hope of the divine favor—all strength to resist and conquer sin—all power of a holy life comes from this blood. Is man redeemed? It is because " we have redemption through his blood." Are any ransomed from sin? " Not by corruptible ransom of silver and gold " are they purchased, " but by the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without spot." Are these justified? " Being justified by his blood." Are these cleansed and made holy? " His blood cleanseth from all sin." Are they, as strangers and wanderers from God, restored? " Ye who sometime were afar off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ." Have they access to the Father s presence in prayer? It is because the High Priest hath gone before " sprinkling the blood." Are they arrayed in spotless robes to appear at the court of the Great King? " They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Are sinners cast off at last to eternal death? It is because " they have trampled under foot the blood of the Son of God." Thus in the gospel revelations, all mercy, compassion, and grace of God, have their ground in that blood. All conviction of sin, all holy desire and emotion in the soul, all strength to overcome sin ; as all hope and trust and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, come from that blood. S. R.

**14.** This passover was ordained by God to be observed by every Israelite at every return of this day of the year ; not only because it was to be a standing proof to all future ages of this their deliverance, but also a standing figure or type of a much greater. *Bp. Wilson.*——As the Israelites were instructed to keep the passover in remembrance of their escape from the Egyptian bondage, so are we required to observe the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in memory of our deliverance from the yoke of sin. And it is remarkable, that both the Jewish and the Christian rite were enjoined in commemoration of events, which had not yet happened, with the same degree of precision as if they had actually taken place. *Polwhele.*

The redemption of Israel out of Egypt was, as a matter of indisputable fact, accomplished by Moses. It was accomplished on his part reluctantly. It was accomplished, as he believed, in obedience to a divine command. It was accomplished without bloodshed or the drawing of a sword. It was accomplished at once, and without failure or delay. It was accomplished in connection with certain circumstances—such as the institution of the Passover, for example —which gave it a peculiar significance. For fifteen hundred years the Passover was kept, and it was utterly devoid of meaning if it did not point backward to the deliverance out of Egypt. But, unless the record of its institution is altogether untrustworthy, it rested on precisely the same authority as that deliverance itself ; and yet that deliverance is the most remarkable event in all history. Every great stage in the historic development of Israel is distinctly announced beforehand. The thraldom in Egypt was announced to Abraham ; the deliverance from Egypt was announced to Moses ; the establishment of the throne of Judah was announced to David ; the captivity was announced to Hezekiah ; the return was announced to Jeremiah ; the ingathering of the Gentiles was announced to Hosea and to Malachi. The fulfilment of the last elucidates the fulfilment of the others. Hosea's prophecy was eight centuries before the fact. We dare not, in the face of that, assert that the record of all the others was written after the event to which it referred—to say nothing of such a theory involving so much acquiescence of the nation in the open falsehood of the writers as is absolutely inconceivable. *Leathes.*

**21–27.** *Directions which, in obedience to the command, Moses gave at the time to the people.* This method of composition occurs frequently in the Pentateuch : it involves of course some repetition, from which no very ancient writer would shrink, but it would scarcely have been adopted by a compiler. Moses is ever careful to record first the commands which he receives, and afterward the way in which he executed them. *Cook.*

**21. Families.** No single sacrifice could be offered for the community, because Israel had no existence as a community yet. If Israel was to be reconciled as a whole, that it might escape the coming judgment, it was necessary that each of the separate family-groups into which it was divided should offer for itself the atoning sacrifice, and protect itself from the wrath of the judge with the atoning blood of the victim. When this atoning blood had been smeared upon the lintel and door-posts, the whole house was protected and everything in it ; for the entrance represented the entire house. K.

**Kill the passover.** The *lamb* was called the *paschal* or *passover* lamb ; the *animal* that was to be sacrificed on this occasion got the name of

the *institution* itself. Paul copies the expression (1 Cor. 5 : 7). *Christ our passover* (our paschal lamb) *is sacrificed for us.* A. C.

**21–24.** The night of the fourteenth day of the month Nisan—that night of grief to the Egyptians—was a night of earnest waiting and of solemn preparation by the Israelites. They had received instructions for its observance in that form in which it was to become a yearly commemorative festival of their deliverance to all generations. It thus, like the great Christian rite of the Lord's Supper, was instituted previous to the occurrence of the event, the memory of which it was designed to keep alive in coming ages. Intended to be the great national festival of the Israelites, "the Passover" commemorated not only the deliverance wrought for them by their Almighty Protector, but their introduction into an independent national existence, and the solemnities with which it was to be observed were directed to be such as should call up vividly to the mind the remembrance of that event. As each house had its own special deliverance from the calamity which carried wailing into the houses of Egypt, so there was to be in each a domestic celebration. As in this night of emancipation no Israelitish house marked with the blood of the slain lamb was invaded by death, so the sprinkling of the lamb's blood on the door-posts or the altar was to make, through all time, a part of the commemoration. And they were to eat unleavened cakes, in remembrance of the urgent circumstances which, on that memorable night, had prevented the usual preparation for the making of bread. *Kit.*

**21–24.** The provision here made was that the Israelites and whosoever would, should take a lamb, that lamb being typical and significant of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world : that lamb they were to kill, and sprinkle its blood upon the lintel, and wherever the destroying angel saw this, from that house he should reverently retire, holding it and its inmates safe and sacred things. This was not that God required blood sprinkled on the lintel to let his messenger know who were his people, and who were Pharaoh's, but it was to be a typical and significant rite. While it answered the great purpose of distinction for the day, it was to endure as a lasting and expressive lesson book inculcating a great truth, until the fulness of the times should come, when the Passover, like a dim morning star, should be merged in the splendor of the rising and increasing Sun of Righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ. J. C.

The blood of the paschal lamb did not save the Israelites by being *shed*, but by being *sprinkled*. It is not the blood of Christ as shed on Calvary, but as sprinkled on the soul, that saves us from the wrath to come. *Kit.*——Blood sprinkled on the lintel and door-posts alone was the safety of Israel. Not deeds—not race—not anything inside the house—but wholly the blood outside was safety. There might be doubt or fears within, but those did not weaken the protection. The blood of Jesus is our safety—and it alone. J. C.——The shedding of blood holds forth the great idea of atonement for sin by the substitution of the life of the victim,—which "life is in the blood"—for the forfeited life of the sinner. But you may observe here the exhibition of the mode in which, and the conditions on which, the penitent becomes clothed with the rights of the substitute. This consists simply in sprinkling the blood—nothing else. "For when he seeth *the blood* the Lord will pass over." The hyssop branch, with which the blood was struck on the door, is the simple emblem of the appropriating faith which applies the blood to the sin-stained soul. Hence David, under a deep sense of his sinfulness, cries "purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean." The unleavened bread which is to be eaten betokens the sincerity and truth with which the act is to be done. The bitter herbs so specially commanded are a significant reminder, not only of the sorrowful eating of "the fruit of their own doings," to which they were doomed, but also a warning that redemption by the sprinkled blood may be consistent with many a disagreeable cross and trial. Yea, and the very mode of the eating, with the staff in hand, loins girt, and sandals on the feet—"eating in haste"—is a significant reminder that though they are the redeemed of Jehovah, they are still pilgrims and strangers, as all their fathers were. That they have no abiding city here, but must be up and journeying from the land of Egypt and its bondage to a better country, even the land of which the Lord hath spoken to the fathers. Thus suddenly we come here upon a gospel of full detail, which is henceforth to take the place of that more general and indefinite gospel of salvation by atoning blood which has hitherto been revealed. S. R.

**23. When he seeth.** The sign is properly for him, who sees it and judges accordingly ; now the blood was seen by Jehovah, as he himself said, and not by the Israelites who were sitting in the houses. And it was just because the blood availed as a sign for Jehovah, that it furnished Israel with a firm ground of

confidence. *Baum.*——The separation between Israel and the Egyptians was not such as to amount to isolation. Goshen would be chiefly, but not exclusively, inhabited by Israelites. These would mingle even in the agricultural districts, but, naturally, much more in the towns, with their Egyptian neighbors. Accordingly, it needed the Paschal provision of the blood to distinguish the houses of the Israelites from those of the Egyptians ; while Exodus 3 : 22 seems to imply that they were not only neighbors, but perhaps, occasionally, residents in the same houses. This also accounts for the "mixed multitude" that accompanied Israel at the Exodus, and, later on, in the wilderness, for the presence in the congregation of offspring from marriages between Jewish women and Egyptian husbands. A. E.

**24. Observe this thing forever.** The repetition of this solemnity in the return of every year was designed, *First*, To *look backward* as a memorial, that in it they might remember what great things God had done for them and their fathers. The word *pesach* signifies a *leap* or *transition :* it is a passing over ; for the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites, and did not destroy their firstborn. When God brings utter ruin upon his people, he says, *I will not pass by them any more* (Am. 7 : 8 ; 8 : 2), intimating how often he had passed by them, as now when the destroying angel passed over their houses. Distinguishing mercies lay under peculiar obligations. When *a thousand fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand*, and yet we are preserved, and have our lives given us for a prey, this should greatly affect us (Ps. 91 : 7) If the arrow of death has passed by us, passed over us, hit the next to us, and just missed us, we must not say it was by chance that we were preserved, but by the special providence of our God. Old mercies, to ourselves or to our fathers, must not be forgotten, but be had in everlasting remembrance, that God may be praised, our faith in him encouraged, and our hearts enlarged in his service. *Secondly*, It was designed to *look forward* as an earnest of the great sacrifice of the *Lamb of God* in the fulness of time, instead of us and our firstborn ; we were obnoxious to the sword of the destroying angel, but *Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us*, his death was our life, and thus he was the *Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, from the foundation of the Jewish church : Moses kept the passover by faith in Christ, for Christ was *the end of the law for righteousness.* H.

**27. Shall say.** On this is founded the beautiful custom, which has always prevailed among the Israelites in later times, at least since the dispersion, that the son of the house, at an appointed time in the Paschal Supper, shall ask the father of the family, "What meaneth all this?" and the father answers : "We eat this Passover, because the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt. We eat these bitter herbs, because the Egyptians made the lives of our fathers bitter in Egypt. We eat this unleavened bread, because our fathers had not time enough to leaven their dough before the Lord appeared and redeemed them. Therefore shall we confess, laud, praise, and magnify him who hath shown unto us and our fathers so great wonders, and hath brought us from bondage into freedom, from sorrow into joy, from darkness into great light." This is called the "Haggada," the declaration—explanation. *Gerl.*

THE FIRST PASSOVER OBSERVED (v. 28).

**27, 28. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went and did so ; as the LORD had commanded, so did they.**

From Heb. 11 : 27, 28, we learn that that first Passover evening was another illustration of faith. Noticeably, the writer speaks of both the leaving of Egypt and the keeping of the Passover as illustrating the faith of Moses rather than of the whole people of Israel. "By faith *he* (Moses) forsook Egypt ;" "by faith *he* (Moses again) kept the Passover." Moses knew better than they the mighty issues that were pending ; the fearful peril they were escaping. The mighty *faith* of these transactions was his rather than theirs. H. C.

THE TENTH PLAGUE—SMITING OF THE FIRSTBORN (vs. 29, 30).

It was not called forth by either the rod or hand of Moses, nor did it proceed from the water, the earth, or the air ; but the hand of Jehovah himself was stretched forth (as he had said, v. 12) : "At midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and smite *all the firstborn* in Egypt, both of man and beast, and *I will execute judgment against all the gods of the Egyptians*, I Jehovah !" In the *tenth plague* the idea and intention of all the plagues were embodied and fulfilled. It was thought of and announced first (chap. 4 : 22, 23), but it was necessarily the last to appear. If it had been the first to appear, the fact would not have been so completely and universally displayed, that Jehovah was *the Lord in the midst of the land* (8 : 22), the Lord over the

water, the earth, and the air, over gods and men, cattle and plants, and *that there was none like him in all the earth* (9 : 14). For this purpose it was necessary that there should be *many miracles* wrought in the land of Egypt (11 : 9) ; and it was also requisite that they should have both sharply defined natural features and an unmistakably miraculous character, in order that freedom of choice might be left for faith or unbelief. But the tenth plague bore upon the face of it a purely supernatural character, and because it was the tenth, *i.e.* the one which gave a finish and completeness to the whole, it exhibited in a clear and unequivocal manner the design of all the plagues from the very commencement ; for the last furnished the key to the entire series. And inasmuch as Pharaoh's resistance was overcome by the tenth plague, although the hardness of his heart was complete ; this fact alone was sufficient to prove that the obstinacy of his refusal had only served to glorify the name of Jehovah, and that the words of Jehovah were fulfilled : "*For this cause have I raised thee up, to show in thee my power.*" K.

**29. All firstborn.** The destroying angel selects from each family through the land of Egypt the single victim pointed out ; and while with unerring hand he aims this shaft of death, he passes over every habitation of Jacob, marked with the sign appointed by the divine command. Do we not in all this discover the plain operation of that Being, who alone is the God of nature and the Lord of life ; whose will controls every element and directs every event ? *Dr. Graves.*——We may suppose that the Israelites had finished the paschal supper, and were awaiting, in awful suspense, the next great event, when the midnight cry of anguish arose through all the land of Egypt. At that moment Jehovah slew the firstborn in every house, from the king to the captive ; and, by smiting also all the firstborn of cattle, he "executed judgment on all the gods of Egypt." P. S.——The circumstance, that it was not merely the firstborn of the god-king Pharaoh and of the sacred animals that were slain, but all the firstborn of man and beast, from the son of Pharaoh who sat upon his throne, to the son of the slave-woman that stood behind the mill, from the Apis that was kept in the temple and worshipped as a god, to the most common and unclean of the beasts, was the most humiliating part of the whole to the gods of Egypt, for it was a practical declaration of the absolute equality of both of them. K.

They had slain the Hebrews' children, and now God slew theirs. Thus he visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children ; and he is *not unrighteous who taketh vengeance.* It reached from the throne to the dungeon : prince and peasant stand upon the same level before God's judgments, for there is no respect of persons with him. H.

**30.** Now God begins to call for the blood they owed him : in one night every house hath a carcass in it ; and, which is more grievous, of their firstborn ; and, which is yet more fearful, in an instant. No man could comfort other : every man was too full of his own sorrow ; helping rather to make the noise of the lamentation more doleful and astonishing. *Bp. H.*——The blow was universal and irresistible. There was no respect of persons in the indiscriminate destruction of the appointed victims. All the firstborn, from man in the vigor of manhood to the infant which had just been born, died in that hour of death. The stay, the comfort, the delight of every family was annihilated at a single stroke ! And how natural was it for them in such a scene of carnage to fancy that they were all doomed to destruction, and that the work of death would not cease till they had all perished ? *Bush.*——The horrors of this night may be better conceived when we call to mind that the Egyptians were noted for the wild and frantic wailings with which they lamented their dead. Screaming women rush about with dishevelled hair, troops of people assemble in tumultuous commiseration around the house, where a single corpse is laid out—and now every house and every family had its victim. Hebrew tradition has increased the horror of the calamity, asserting that the temples were shaken, the idols overthrown, the sacred animals, chosen as the firstborn, involved in the universal destruction. *Milman.*——Is this a dreadful picture ? Yet it is but a type of what *must* be—a shadow merely of the wrath to come to all the unsprinkled souls' tenements in eternity. Ye that affect to think so lightly of death and eternity ! see here this shadow and gather the elementary ideas of what *shall* be, from what *h as been*, already, under the government of God. Standing, in imagination, amid these complicated horrors in Egypt —the groans of the dying, mingling with the shrieks of the living, throughout a whole empire :—all earthly pomp and power levelled to mingle its unavailing cries with the lowest and meanest in a common woe—here see what it is for "God to whet his glittering sword and his hand to take hold on vengeance." S. R.

But on that eventful Passover night, what a contrast lay there side by side between the homes of Israel and the dwellings of Egypt—

the Angel of God's mercy presiding at the tables of the one, but the Angel of Death bursting open every door and singling out every first-born in the other ; the quiet repose of faith smiling over the domestic scenes of the one, but the agonies of death and the wails of smitten hearts desolating the other ! That was indeed a lesson in faith, witnessing to the potency of the blood of sprinkling, signifying that under its wing there was pardoning mercy, and "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." H. C.

**31-36.** How soon hath God changed the note of this tyrannical people ! Egypt was never so stubborn in denying passage to Israel, as now importunate to entreat it : Pharaoh did not more force them to stay before, than now to depart : whom lately they would not permit, now they hire to go. Their rich jewels of silver and gold were not too dear for them, whom they hated ; how much rather would they to send them away wealthy, than to have them stay to be their executors ! Their love to themselves obtained of them the enriching of their enemies ; and now they are glad to pay them well, for their old work, and their present journey : God's people had stayed like slaves, they go away like conquerors, with the spoil of those that hated them ; armed for security, and wealthy for maintenance. *Bp. H.*

**31, 32. Called for Moses and Aaron.** As Moses had before this withdrawn from the presence of Pharaoh, with the determination to see his face no more, this must be understood to mean that Pharaoh sent his servants to Moses and Aaron, and communicated his message to them. This was a striking fulfilment of Moses' previous declaration (ch. 11 : 8), and clearly proving that he then spake under a divine impulse ; "And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee." *Bush.*

The messengers were undoubtedly chief officials ; they bowed themselves before Moses, who was now recognized as "very great," and delivered their master's message, which granted in express terms all that Moses had ever demanded. **And bless me also.** Here Pharaoh's humiliation reaches its extreme point. He is reduced by the terrible calamity not only to grant all the demands made of him freely and without restriction, but to crave the favor of a blessing from those whom he had despised, rebuked, thwarted, and finally driven from his presence under the threat of death. Those with whom were the issues of life and death must, he felt, have the power to bless or curse effectually. G. R.

Yet the sequel shows clearly that even now he was not penitent. He submitted not in heart, nor sincerely humbled himself before God. He let them go by constraint and most unwillingly. He would still have held out if he had dared, and he yielded only because he could oppose no longer. He made a forced show of obedience, but his heart was as hard and rebellious as ever.

**33. And the Egyptians were urgent.** The same word in the original with that which is, for the most part, applied to the *hardening* (strengthening) of Pharaoh's heart, implying a most vehement, pressing urgency. Ps. 105 : 38, "Egypt was glad when they departed : for the fear of them fell upon them." Jerus. Targ. "The Egyptians said, If Israel tarry one hour, lo, all the Egyptians are dead men." For aught they knew, the plague they had experienced might be but the precursor of another still more dreadful, that would sweep off the whole population in a mass. *Bush.*

**35, 36.** The Israelites then did what Jehovah had previously commanded them to do : they asked the Egyptians for *articles of gold and silver* (trinkets and jewels) and for *clothes* (festal clothing). And Jehovah caused his people to find favor in the eyes of the Egyptians, so that they gave without hesitation whatever was demanded. K.——**36. Spoiled the Egyptians.** This was in fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham (Gen. 15 : 14), "They shall come out with great substance" Israel came into Egypt few in numbers ; but they go out from the land of their oppressors greatly increased, mighty, and formidable ; laden with the spoils of their cruel oppressors, the well-earned reward of the labors of many years, and of much sorrow. In allusion, perhaps, to this event, God says by the prophet Ezekiel (ch. 39 : 10), "And they shall *spoil* those that *spoiled* them, and rob them that robbed them, saith the Lord God." *Bush.*

There is not a word in the text about borrowing or lending. The Hebrews demanded, and the Egyptians in their panic encouraged them to demand, the articles mentioned. The spoiling of Egypt was but the right of Israel, who had been so long spoiled of just wages by servile oppression. It is remarkable how prominent a part this circumstance, the enriching of Israel at the cost of the Egyptians, has played since the first announcement of the Exodus to Abraham : compare Gen. 15 : 14 ; ch. 3 : 21, 22 ; 11 : 2, 3, in which latter place it would almost appear that the process must have begun even

before the last plague. It was regarded all the way through as a lawful booty gained from enemies, who had long oppressed and defrauded them. *Alf.*

Israel required these things for their religious worship ; and they could no more depart without them than without their cattle, as these "jewels of silver and jewels of gold" were to serve in forming a sanctuary for the people's worship, and were under their circumstances quite needful. *Gerl.*——Although the quantity of golden ornaments required to make the golden calf must have been far from inconsiderable, and this calf was subsequently destroyed (Ex. 32 : 20) ; we read shortly afterward (Ex 35 : 21, seq ), that the whole community, both men and women, brought "clasps and earrings, signet rings, necklaces, and all sorts of trinkets of gold," as a free-will offering toward the erection and furnishing of the tabernacle. Let any one think for a moment what a mass of gold must have been used in connection with the tabernacle, when the beams were all plated with gold, and the articles of furniture were either made of solid gold or at least covered with it, and he will be obliged to admit not only that the quantity of gold in the possession of the Israelites was extraordinary, but that if we were not acquainted with the circumstance narrated here, it would be incredible and inconceivable. K.

In this history is typically represented to us the condition of the Church of the Lord among the people of the earth at all times. The people of God are really free, and called to serve their Lord. For a while the Lord allows them to suffer oppression, under which they sigh ; but at last he leads them forth from their captivity, inflicting heavy punishment on their oppressors, and with the spoil taken from their enemies may they now glorify their Lord. Hence the intellectual culture which the Christian Church learnt from heathen antiquity was rightly called by the fathers of the Church, "The spoils of Egypt." *Gerl.*

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Among the various festivals of the Jewish Church, one only was distinctly historical. In the feast of the Pascha or Passover, the scene of the flight of the Israelites, its darkness, its hurry, its confusion, was acted year by year, as in a living drama. In part it is still so acted throughout the Jewish race ; in all its essential features (some of which have died out everywhere else) it is enacted, in the most lively form, by the solitary remnant of that race which, under the name of Samaritan, celebrates the whole Paschal sacrifice, year by year, on the summit of Mount Gerizim. So has lived on for centuries the tradition of the Deliverance from Egypt ; and so it lives on still, chiefly in the Hebrew race, but, in part, in the Christian Church also. Alone of all the Jewish festivals, the Passover has outlasted the Jewish polity, has overleaped the boundary between the Jewish and Christian communities. The Paschal Lamb, in deed or in word, is become to us symbolical of the most sacred of all events. Jew and Christian both celebrate what is to a certain extent a common festival ; even the most sacred ordinance of the Christian religion is, in its outward form, a relic of the Paschal Supper, accompanied by hymn and thanksgiving, in the upper chamber of a Jewish household A. P. S.

### *The Divine Legation of Moses.*

When eighty years old, an age which according to the present proportion of life may be fairly reckoned at 60 or 65, when the fire of ambition is usually burnt out and the active spirit of adventure subsided, entirely unattended, Moses appears again in Egypt, and boldly undertakes the extraordinary enterprise of delivering the people of Israel from their state of slavery, and establishing them as a regular and independent commonwealth. To effect this he had first to obtain a perfect command over the minds of the people, now scattered through the whole land of Egypt, their courage broken by long and unintermitted slavery, habituated to Egyptian customs and even deeply tainted with Egyptian superstitions ; he had to induce them to throw off the yoke of their tyrannical masters, and follow him in search of a remote land, only known by traditions many centuries old as the residence of their forefathers. Secondly, he had to overawe and induce to the surrender of their whole useful slave population, not merely an ignorant and superstitious people, but the king and the priesthood of a country where science had made considerable progress, and where the arts of an impostor would either be counteracted by similar arts, or instantly detected and exposed to shame and ridicule. *Milman.*

Moses was either a true prophet, an enthusiast, a dupe, or an impostor. That he was not an enthusiast, may be argued from his learning ; he was versed in all the learning of Egypt —from his education among the courtiers of Pharaoh—from the diffidence with which he received the first annunciation of his mission—from the admirable suitableness of his law to the accomplishment of the object proposed—

the knowledge therein displayed of human nature—the connection of laws politically necessary with religion. He could not have been a dupe ; for if the appearance in the burning bush had not been real—if he had been deceived in the evidences of his mission—if the miracles wrought to convince him that he was the chosen prophet of God had been only natural phenomena, he could not have inferred from them that he was to be the legislator and deliverer of the Jews. Neither was he an impostor. An impostor would not have chosen to suffer affliction with a degraded race, rather than to indulge in the gayeties and fascinations of a court—an impostor would not have exposed himself to the danger of death, by vindicating the cause of the oppressed—he would not, if banished to a desert be contented with his lot —forget his schemes of ambition, intermarry among the natives of an obscure province, and calmly sink into the condition of a shepherd. Even if he were at length to rouse from this strange lethargy, and resolve to deliver his countrymen or perish in the attempt, an impostor would have proceeded with some address and policy—he would not enter abruptly into the presence of an absolute sovereign and peremptorily insist on the liberation of a race of "useful slaves :" neither would an impostor commit himself by predicting a series of miraculous judgments if these slaves were not permitted to emigrate. If Moses, too, had been any of these, he could not have conquered armies without fighting, or impressed a whole nation with imaginary terrors—or guided or fed a whole nation for forty years in the wilderness ;—he could not have compelled and he could not have persuaded the Egyptians and their king to resign their dominion over the Israelites, unless he had been possessed of powers more than human. That is, he was a true prophet—he wrought miracles—he was the character he professed to be. The mere fact, that Moses was not a true prophet, and yet delivered the Israelites, would be a much greater miracle than any he is related to have performed. G. T.

### Points of History (*Recapitulation*).

Altogether, the arguments in favor of the nineteenth dynasty being that which held the throne at the time of the events recorded in Exodus seem to preponderate considerably over those which can be adduced in favor of the eighteenth. The eighteenth was too powerful and warlike to have feared invasion, or to have regarded Israel as a danger. It built no "store cities." It was unacquainted with the name Rameses. It did not hold its court at Tanis. It contained neither king nor prince of the name of Sethos (Seti). The nineteenth was differently situated. It combined the various particulars to which the eighteenth was a stranger. Moreover, it terminated in such a time of weakness as might have been expected to follow the calamities recorded in Exodus ; while the eighteenth was glorious to its very close, and gave no indication of diminished greatness.

On the whole it would seem to be most probable that the Israelites, having come into Egypt in the reign of Apophis (Apepi), the last Shepherd King, who was a thoroughly Egyptianized Asiatic, remained there as peaceable subjects under the great and warlike eighteenth dynasty for some three hundred years, gradually, as the memory of Joseph's benefits faded, suffering more and more oppression, but multiplying in spite of it, till at length a change of dynasty occurred, and with it a change of policy in respect of them.

Moderate ill-usage was succeeded by the harshest possible treatment ; their "lives were made bitter with hard bondage." The "new king who knew not Joseph" (Exod. 1 : 8) is, perhaps, in the mind of the writer, rather Sethos I. than Rameses I., who reigned but a year and four months. Sethos, threatened on his north-eastern frontier by the Hittites, and fearing lest the Hebrews should join them, devised the plans ascribed to the "new king" in Exod. 1—set them to build "store cities, Pithom and Rameses," the latter named probably after his son ; when this had no effect, sought to check their increase by means of the midwives ; and finally required that all their male offspring should be thrown into the Nile. There is nothing in the character of Seti I., as represented upon his monuments, to render these severities improbable. He was a good son and a good father, but an implacable enemy and a harsh ruler. His treatment of prisoners taken in war was cruel beyond the wont of his time, his campaigns were sanguinary, and his temper fierce and resentful. If Moses was born under Seti I., and bred up by his daughter, the king under whom he found himself when he grew to manhood, and from whom he fled to the land of Midian, must have been Rameses II. Seti associated his son Rameses when he was about twelve years of age, and shortly afterward he practically transferred to him the reins of power. Rameses II. claims to have held the throne for at least sixty-seven years, and was assigned sixty-six by Manetho. His reign is the longest

of all the Egyptian reigns, except that of Phiops. He was a king likely to have continued the "hard bondage" of the Israelites, for he was the most indefatigable of builders, and effected the greater number of his constructions by the instrumentality of forced labor. Lenormant says that "during his reign thousands of captives must have died under the rod of the taskmaster, or have fallen victims to overwork or privations of every description;" and that "in all his monuments there was not, so to speak, a single stone which had not cost a human life." It was the sight of oppression such as this which provoked the indignation of Moses, and led to the rash act which caused him to quit Egypt and fly to Midian. So long as Rameses II. lived, the exile felt that he could not return. It must have been weary waiting for the space of forty years or more, while the great Pharaoh made his expeditions, excavated his canal and erected his numerous buildings. The weariness of prolonged exile shows itself in the name given by Moses to his eldest son: "He called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." At length, "in process of time"—after a reign which exceeded sixty-six years—"the king of Egypt died" (Exod. 2:23); and Moses, divinely informed of the fact (Exod. 3:19), returned to Egypt to his brethren.

If Seti I. be the king who commenced the oppression, and Rameses II. the monarch from whom Moses fled, the Pharaoh whom he found seated in the throne upon his return must have been Meneptah. The character of this king, as depicted in the Egyptian monuments, bears a considerable resemblance to that of the adversary of Moses. He was proud, vainglorious, disinclined to expose his own person in war, yet ready enough to send his soldiers into positions of peril. The cruelties that he sanctioned in his Libyan war are worthy of the monarch who, when a subject people complained of their burdens, met the complaint by making their burdens heavier. He appears in Egyptian history as the weak successor of two powerful monarchs; he has one military success, due not to himself, but to his generals, after which his reign is inglorious and closes in disaster. Meneptah, like his father, commonly held his court at Tanis. It would be there, "in the field of Zoan," that Moses and Aaron confronted him and wrought their "wonders." The struggle, the departure, the pursuit, the disaster in the Red Sea, may belong to the king's sixth year; and two years afterward he may have succumbed to revolutionary movements consequent upon the losses which he suffered in the Red Sea catastrophe. His reign certainly ended amid clouds and darkness, and was followed by a period of civil disturbance, terminating in bloodshed and anarchy. The troubles of this period, described in the "Great Harris Papyrus," together with the remarkable successes of Rameses III., second monarch of the twentieth dynasty, would fall into the period passed by Israel in the "Wilderness of the Wanderings," and would thus naturally obtain no direct mention in the sacred narrative. Rameses may, however, have been the "hornet" which God sent before Israel to break the power of the Canaanites and Hittites (Exod. 23:28), and render the conquest of Palestine more easy. He seems certainly to have made at least one great expedition into Asia, and to have reduced under his sway the whole tract between "the river of Egypt" and the Euphrates. Had the Israelites been in possession of Palestine at the time, he must have come in contact with them, and have seriously interfered with their independence. As it was, his Syrian wars, by weakening the Canaanite nations, paved the way for the victories of Joshua and the Israelite occupation of the "Land of Promise."

The depressed state of Egypt between the death of Rameses III. and the accession of the first Sheshonk accounts for the absence of all mention of the Egyptians from the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel. G. R.

# Section 90.

## SUPPLEMENTARY.

1 Chronicles 1 : 1-54.

This Section is added to complete the plan of the work. As the text is in the main a transcript from Genesis 5th, 10th, 11th, 25th, and 36th, it is not deemed necessary to insert it here. B.

The genealogical tables, though to us comparatively uninteresting, were highly important among the Jews, who were made by prophetic promises extremely observant in these particulars. These tables give the sacred lives through which the promise was transmitted for nearly 3500 years ; a fact itself unexampled in the history of the human race. *Angus.* ——It was fit to begin these Chronicles of Jewish history by tracing the original and descent of this select people of God to the very first man, who was the son of God. This was the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation, that they alone were able to derive their pedigree from the first man that God created ; of which no other nation could boast, or even make a shadow of pretence. For no book in the world shows the original propagation of mankind, but only the Holy Scriptures [originating with and preserved by the chosen People, the children of Israel]. *Patrick.*

**1 Chron. chap. 1.** The whole of these Patriarchal forefathers of the house of David down to Israel and Edom, sons of Isaac, appear to be divided into two nearly equal parts, to the second of which is added an appendix on the descendants of Edom till the times of David. The first part (vs 1–23) enumerates the ten Antediluvian Patriarchs from Adam to Noah, the three sons of Noah, and the Seventy Nations descending from them. In the second part (vs. 24–42) are given the ten generations from Shem to Abraham, the sons of Abraham by Hagar, Keturah, and Sarah, and the stocks derived from them, which again amount to Seventy. The Appendix (vs. 43–54) mentions the kings of the Edomites before David (Gen. 36) and the eleven dukes of Edom. *Lange.*

**1–23.** Adam's Line to Noah. Only that one member of the family is mentioned who came in the direct order of succession. **4–23. Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth**—The three sons of this patriarch are enumerated, because they were the founders of the new world and because the fulfilment of Noah's prophecy (Gen. 9 : 25–27) could not otherwise appear to have been verified. **14–17.** In these verses the names are not those of individuals, but of people who all sprang from Canaan ; and as several of them became extinct or were amalgamated with their brethren, their national appellations are given instead of the personal names of their ancestors. **17. Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech ;** these were the children of Aram and *grandsons* of Shem (Gen. 10 : 23).

**24–28.** Shem's Line to Abraham. 24. Shem, etc.—This comprises a list of ten, inclusive of Abraham.

**29–31.** Sons of Ishmael. 23. These are their generations—The heads of his twelve tribes. The great northern desert of Arabia, including the entire neck, was colonized by these tribes ; and if we can recover, in the modern geography of this part of the country, Arab tribes bearing the names of those patriarchs, *i.e.*, names corresponding with those preserved in the original catalogue of Scripture, we obtain at once so many evidences, not of mere similarity, but of absolute identification. **Nebaioth**—Gave rise to the Nabathæans of the classic, and the *Beni Nabat* of Oriental writers. **Kedar**—The Arab tribe, El Khedeyre, on the coast of Hedgar. **Abdeel**—Abdilla, the name of a tribe in Yemen. **30. Dumah**—Dumah and Tema, the great Arab tribes of Beni Teman. Thus *Forster* traces the names of all the heads of the twelve tribes of Ishmael as perpetuated in the clans or tribes of the Arabs in the present day.

**32, 33. Sons of Keturah. 32. Sons of Keturah**—These became founders of nomadic tribes in the north of Arabia and Syria, as Midian of the Midianites (Gen. 36 : 35). **Shuah**—From whom Bildad sprang (Job 2 : 11). *Jamieson.*

Even where we are unable to perceive the historical importance of the prominent names, and the grounds on which they must have been of interest to every devout Israelite, the fact of such importance is to be presumed in every case. *Lange.*——These dry names from a hoary antiquity, when we know how to awaken them from their sleep, announce and revive the most important traditions of the ancient nations and families, like the petrifactions and mountain strata of the earth, which, rightly questioned, tell the history of long-vanished ages. *Ewald.*

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[The titles and publishers of leading works, *additional* to those given in previous volumes, are here appended to the names of authors. A helpful service in the interest of readers and writers is thus subserved.]

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